

K
MR. HERVEY'S
MEDITATIONS
AND
CONTEMPLATIONS.

In TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.
MEDITATIONS among
the TOMBS.
REFLECTIONS on a
FLOWER-GARDEN.
A DESCANT on
CREATION.

VOL. II.
CONTEMPLATIONS on
the NIGHT.
CONTEMPLATIONS
on the STARRY
HEAVENS.
A WINTER PIECE

Attempted in BLANK VERSE

(After the Manner of Dr. YOUNG)

By T. NEWCOMB, A. M.

VOL. I.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ARTHUR ONSLOW
OF HIS MAJESTY'S
MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL
LATE SPEAKER
OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
IN FIVE SUCCESSIVE PARLIAMENTS
AND TO
SIR THOMAS PARKER KNT
LORD CHIEF BARON
OF THE COURT OF EXCHEQUER
THIS POETICAL VERSION
OF MR. HERVEY'S MEDITATIONS
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
OF MANY FAVOURS CONFERRED
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR

MEDITATIONS

AMONG THE

T O M B S.

THE sun is sunk, and o'er the silent world
Hath dim-ey'd Evening thrown her mantle grey;

Parent of musings; she with gloomy brow
Frowns on the trav'ler, and his way obscures.
A rural village opening to my eye
Sollicits me to stop—An awful dome,
Magnificently high, arrests my view,
Inciting me to gaze—With pious dread
And rev'rence, I approach its sacred shrines,
The doors unfolding wide like those of Heav'n,
To which they lead, a ready entrance yield;
The hallow'd structure, lonely and retir'd,
Exalts the soul on Contemplation's wings,
The breast inspiring, with a train of thoughts,
Mournfully pleasing—serious and sublime.

Solemn the pile—by age more solemn made,
And the sad mould'ring relicks of the dead;
Rais'd by those hands, which all-destroying Time
Had whelm'd long since in dust—Grim Death, thy
Spacious the nave; and beautifully plain [spoils!

The lofty roof; supported by a row
 Of graceful pillars which the dome divide,
 Simple, yet grand; the rays that faintly gleam'd
 Thro' the dim windows seem'd to shed around
 A darkness visible, while Silence slept
 Soft on the bosom of the waveless air,
 And crown'd with gloomy charms the solemn scene.
 Religious dread now seiz'd upon my soul,
 Thoughtful and pensive; each rude passion calm'd,
 As now I reach the temple's inmost isle,
 Which dissipates the gay ideas pour'd
 From a vain world, remember'd now no more.

Say, Muse! what first my deep attention claim'd;
 A letter'd floor—which like the prophets roll
 With characters inscrib'd from end to end,
 Of lamentation, mourning, grief, and woe.
 Each marble had a voice, and seem'd to court,
 In silent eloquence, my eye to read,
 What these dumb monitors, without a tongue,
 Invited me to learn—What say these stones?

- Beneath the surface of a lonely grave
- Here sleep the cold remains (now turn'd to dust)
- Of those, who once on earth, liv'd, joy'd, and
 smil'd;

- The tenants of an hour—now clods of clay.

- No record else allow'd by Heaven's decree

- To snatch them from oblivion, or prolong

• Their

AMONG THE TOMBS. 3

• Their names and memory, but the faithful stone.

To Wisdom's school, if willing to repair,
The sages philosophic schemes deride;
Learn'd follies all, in Wisdom's robes array'd!
The volumes then of science throw away,
Which puzzle, not enlighten; tho' they boast
The heights and depths of Nature's vast profound
To penetrate; a knowledge suited more
To man's frail state, his momentary scene
Of life, is best collected from a tomb.

This the grand lesson taught, by every grave,
"Mortal, be wise—regard thy latter end."
That spark from Heaven, which often fires the soul,
Is quench'd in Erudition's glowworm glare,
But shines enlighten'd with a brighter ray,
When near the gloomy mansions of the tomb.
The gentle whispers breath'd from every urn,
Distinctly heard, where Contemplation wakes
The soul to serious thoughts, advising man
On that great teacher DEATH to turn his eye.

How kind that friendly Providence which guides
My soul to solemn truths, to Wisdom's school;
The grave, that faithful monitor, which shews
The truest end of life; from whose dark gloom
The best and most instructive lessons flow.
Death teaching us to live; Attention calm,
Oh come, and every jarring thought compose!

Celestial spirit, haste, and pour aray
Of thy inspiring light into my mind !
That 'midst this gloomy scene of death and tears
From each sad silent marble I may learn
That great important lesson—' how to dye.'
Amidst the sad records of names enroll'd,
Swept off by Death, and mingled now with dust ;
There opens a dark vault, whose chambers hold
Promiscuous crowds, who in this solemn gloom
Huddled together, sleep and rest in peace.
Within this house of mourning none contend
For rank and station ; none ambitious strain
For rooms of state ; preheminance above
The vulgar dust, now mixt with noblest clay !
Within these darksome cells, no slavish knee
Bends down, in adorations to the vain,
When all distinction dies. Birth, titles, fame,
Crush'd by one stroke of Death : the hoary sage
Surcharg'd with years, and sick of life, lays down
Contented, here, his venerable clay,
Close to an infant's feet—in one cold room,
The haughty lord and slave together lye,
Where the poor indigent, as soundly sleeps
And rests as softly in his peaceful home
As he that once in royal robes array'd
A scepter grasp'd, and blaz'd upon a throne.
The turf with ossers bound, and marbled tomb,

High

AMONG THE TOMBS. 5

High-rais'd, with crests adorn'd and boastful arms,
The only poor distinctions in the grave.

Why then should man his anxious thoughts
employ,

Toil for preheminance on earth, and power ;
Death, the great leveller, will soon reduce
The proud and wretched to one abject state
Of meanness—dare we then, how proudly vain !
Exalt ourselves in fancy, or debase
Another's merits, since the hast'ning hour
Is on the wing, which shall together blend
The sons of wretchedness, and heirs of fame,
In one cold mass of undistinguish'd clay !

Among the relics of the once-inspir'd
With life, there doubtless sleep the cold remains
Of jarring factions—long inveterate foes !
Death, with his icy hand, has now appeas'd,
And in oblivion quench'd their living rage ;
All reconcil'd, and friends within the grave.
Each ranc'rous passion hush'd, that once enflam'd
Their hearts with thoughts of vengeance, join'd
in love

They now embrace ; their mutual feuds forgot,
And all resentments buried in the tomb.
Emblem of innocence, survey that stone
Of virgin white—it tells us, that it hides
An infant, who breath'd out its tender soul,

6 MEDITATIONS

'The moment when with dawning life inspir'd.
'The light just view'd, why dropt the opening
Into the dust, scarce animated clay! [flower

Who in the cradle breath'd a soft adieu
To time, for an eternity exchange'd.

'What pangs could touch her heart, or sighs be
pour'd

From guiltless innocence, to human woes
A happy stranger—Say, was this the cause,
Why with such speed, and eager steps she flew
From life to death, in dread of ills to come,
Up to those mansions of unfading bliss;
How seldom tasted and enjoyed below!

Short happy sojourner! to purchase Heav'n,
'To earn its joys without a sigh or tear!
'Twas thy peculiar lot not once to feel
Those tender pangs of nature which o'erwhelm
Thy sad surviving kindred, which oft draw
'The deepest groan from fortitude's firm breast,
Unfelt by thee—while wretched man is doom'd
Calamity's keen shafts each day to moan, 150
Barb'd with that anguish which corrodes the heart,
And dashes life's embitter'd cup with gall,
Wounding its sweetest comforts—Ah! how oft
'Temptation's fiery darts in flaming showers
Shot from the hand of hell, are taking aim
'To wound our virtue, kill our bosom's peace;

To thee, O just beheld ! this train of woes,
These dangers and distresses all unknown. [tear

Why burst the sighs ! why drops the pitying
Down the sad parent's cheek ? Heaven's watch-
ful eye

Forefaw the crowd of evils that surround
The wretched race of man, to sorrow born,
And in compassion ' the lull'd infant bore
' From the soft cradle lifted to the sky !'

Ah call not then the kind decree severe, [cur'd
Which hous'd your tender plant ; from storms se-
Your opening flower, ere yet the thunders roll'd,
Or forked lightnings darted from the sky,
To blast the blooming beauties of its morn ;
Ere yet the tempest pour'd down all its rage.

Beneath this weeping marble lies entomb'd
A mournful mother's grief—the hope and joy !
How frail the joy of once a happy fire !
The Youth, a-while, like a well-water'd tree
That shoots its blooming verdure all around,
Grew up majestic, vigorous, tall, and fair,
To manhood's height aspiring—but how soon,
As the proud cedar now began to tower,
(The promis'd prince of all the neighbouring
To its deep root the axe's edge is lay'd. [groves)
Struck the dire fatal blow ; it's branching pride
And honours tumbled in one hour to dust.

Say, did he fall alone?—this Fate denies—
Each pensive parent hanging o'er his tomb,
The father's ravish'd hope, the mother's joy,
Lye crush'd together, with him, in one grave.

See there the sad procession, how it moves,
And wakes the heart to pity! can the eye
Of tenderness withhold a gushing tear,
View the sad parents sighing round his hearse,
Nor breathe th' accordant sigh to hear 'em bid
A last adieu to a dear favourite son,
Now hasting to his cold eternal home!
Around the coffin fancy seems to draw
A crowd of weeping mourners, who attend
The sad solemnity with wringing hands,
Expressive emblems of their silent grief;
Deepest her anguish, who with breath inspir'd
Her breathless offspring, now to Death a prey.
I hear, methinks I feel the mother's groan,
Piercing her own, and every other heart
Attentive to the breathings of a soul
Pour'd out in sadness—nearly in despair!
Her pale and trembling lips now want a power
To breathe a last farewell, as she reclines
Her arm on the dear partner of her woes,
Too big to be repress'd; her sorrows now
Struggle for vent, silent and dumb no more.
Her pensive soul now flowing in her eyes,

And

And willing yet, one tender look to throw
On the departing object, ere the grave,
Now open'd, shuts him ever from her view.
On the tomb's gaping brink she stands, her voice
Oft interrupted by a rising sigh, [farewel;
And thus breathes out her grief—' My child,
' Adieu, my best belov'd; late in these arms,
' My soul's chief comfort; now without a joy!
Ah, had the shaft, from destiny that flew,
Miss'd but the son's, and pierc'd a mother's heart,
How kind, how friendly then had been the wound!
Cease then, into my throbbing breast to pour
One ray of comfort—dropt each earthly joy
In this deep cell of earth—by night, by day,
This bosom shall lament; these eyes shall stream
With unabating sorrow's ceaseless moan,
Till Death has wing'd the flying shaft, which
A parent's woes and anguish in a tomb. [throws

That solemn funeral monument hard by
Grav'd on the stone, a mournful tale unfolds,
Demanding pity—Well the artist's steel
Has form'd a group of pensive angels round
His sleeping ashes;—none can surely read
The moving story, and not drop a tear,
Not breathe a sigh of sympathizing woe
Upon the lifeless dust entomb'd beneath.
Just in the florid bloom of life, when Time

And

Had

Had ripen'd him to manhood, strung his nerves
 With vigour, promising a length of days,
 While his cheeks flush'd with beauty, in each vein
 Health wanton'd, the dire shaft was on the wing
 By Heav'n assign'd to whelm him in a grave;
 No warning, no presages of his doom, [joy;
 That moment flush'd, perhaps, with dreams of
 And who that then the sprightly youth beheld,
 His gay appearance, and his eye of flame,
 Cou'd deem his rising sun that shone so fair
 In his life's morn, should set before his noon?
 What scenes of future bliss had fancy rais'd
 And imag'd to this thought! each golden hour,
 Each minute wak'd fresh transports in his soul;
 A series of fair flowing years behind,
 Delusive Hope had figur'd; every joy
 Humanity could taste, in thought, his own!
 Just in the midst of the false cheating dream,
 An arrow launch'd from Destiny's strong bow
 Fix'd in his heart; directed by the hand
 That shivers rocks, lays the proud mountain low,
 And whelms the warrior's crown and wreaths in
 dust. [smooth'd,

Perhaps the nuptial bed, the couch was
 The bride in blushes hastening to his arms,
 And yielding up her heart his bliss to crown,
 When the dire stroke was aim'd that buried all

His

His short ideal joys within a tomb.

Attend the breathings of his raptur'd soul,
Its silent language this—' The hour now nigh
' The gay endearing moment that shall throw
' The blushing fair one soon into my arms,
' Whose beauties wake, whose rubied lips inspire
' The purest bliss that sooths a lover's breast ;
' Amidst Heav'n's chosen gifts, the noblest prize.'
Had some kind friend then whisper'd in his ear,
That Death stood ready with his lifted hand
Aiming the fatal javelin at his heart,
And pointed at the tomb that soon would shroud
His mouldering ashes :—ah ! with what surprize
The hint had been receiv'd ; and how unkind
The tongue, denouncing the youth's speedy doom !
Then warm with life that glow'd thro' every vein.

Vicissitude, how dreadful ! ah how near
Is life to death ! the cradle to the tomb !
Man's frail existence measur'd by a span !
The ocean smooth at first, and soft the gale
That swells our canvas—yet a sudden storm
Oft sinks us in the port to which we sail.
A truth, this mournful marble has engrav'd
Deep with a pen of steel, to warn the vain
Not on to-morrow's sun-shine to rely ;
The spider's web, a cable, if compar'd
With the frail thread, that human life sustains.

Perhaps

Perhaps the bridal virgins stood prepar'd
To light the nuptial torch, the marriage-couch
To deck with richest covers, careful all
The pillow to swell out with plummy down !
Scenting the room with roses, and perfumes,
Exhaling odours to enrich the scene
For love's mysterious sacred rites adorn'd.

Mortal, whoe'er thou art, nor youth nor strength
Has pow'r to guard one moment from the grave,
Fragile and weak, and hast'ning to its end
Whate'er the sun beholds beneath the sky !
While the gay bridegroom, flush'd with eager joy,
Was stepping raptur'd to a bed of down,
Death turn'd his pillow to a bed of clay,
A lodging in the dust—where all must sleep,
The hour unknown, not follow'd by a train
Of gay attendants—The sad gloomy hearse
That bears us to our last and silent home
Crowded with weeping mourners ; here to rest
In darkness, destin'd ne'er to view the day,
One glimpse of cheering light to burst the gloom
Till the stars melt, and the sun rolls no more.

In vain, alas ! the kind consenting fair
Selects her bridal robes and rich attire,
'To shine more gay, and beautify her charms ;
In vain her casement opens to explore
And catch his chariot's wheel, anxious to know

What

What cause so long retards a lover's speed !
Unconscious that the partner of her cares
Now lodg'd within a grave, was doom'd no more
To love, to doat, or breathe a last adieu.

Go, wretched maid ! consult thy Strephon's tomb ;
Steal Wisdom from his stone ; nor let thy heart
Fix its vain hope on sublunary joys,
Thin as the bubble ; fleeting as the shade ;
Just born to die—the phantoms of an hour,
That smile, incite, and, while they please, expire.
Thy lov'd, thy now lamented darling sleeps
Low in the dust, to worms a luscious prey,
Alike forgetful of the world and thee.

Against the king of terrors we exclaim ;
And Reason seems with Justice to decide
Whene'er she thinks, and calls his dark decrees
Severe and cruel—Nature's stated laws
How oft inverted by the tyrant's power !
Frequent we view his barbed arrows fly
O'er the grey head to pierce the cradled babe,
Spare wither'd age just bending to a tomb,
And snatch the infant from a mother's arms,
Smiling, alas, and breathless in an hour !
Youth blasted in its bloom, nor manhood found
In its full vigour, strong enough to shield
Its feeble breast, when Death has aim'd the blow !
Tremendous

Tremendous secrets these ! but kindly plann'd
 By Heaven to shake the world with dread surprize ;
 Man's heart with present terrors to alarm,
 And rouse him out of life's vain waking dreams.
 The midnight knell that tolls o'er ev'ry grave,
 How awful is its sound !—It has a voice
 Heard by the wise, which startles while it warns ;
 Its admonition this to thoughtless man—
 ‘ In time prepare, descending from the cloud,
 ‘ To meet your Saviour God ; his visit near
 ‘ And certain, tho' unknown the destin'd hour.’

Tottering and heedless on the verge we stand
 Of some tremendous precipice that views
 From its dread steep the ocean boil below ;
 How needful then some message from above,
 Some kind alarming terrors to awake
 Our sleeping reason ; this the message sent,
 Their errand this to man—‘ In blooming life
 ‘ We sojourn near the grave—Youth's florid prime,
 ‘ Nor manhood's strength and vigour can secure
 ‘ Man's feeble race, or guard them from the tomb ;
 ‘ So strong the tyrant's arm, no mortal pow'r
 ‘ Its force can baffle—and so sure his aim
 ‘ No wisdom can elude the destin'd blow ;
 ‘ As lightnings sudden his swift arrows fly,
 ‘ And quick as thought, which launching from
 his string,

AMONG THE TOMBS. 15

' The destin'd victims whelm within a tomb.
 ' Drop then each vain expedient, to secure
 ' Your life from death—whose shafts promiscuous
 ' On youth and age ; none able to descry [fall
 ' What victim next their venom'd points shall
 wound. [man :

' Hear, Heaven ! in mercy speaking thus to
 " Live ready and prepar'd ; in darkness veil'd
 " The solemn hour that calls you to the grave !"
 Important admonition which inspires
 The soul with awful dread ; methinks the sound
 From stone to stone is roll'd—The truth it tells
 How worthy on each heart to be engrav'd,
 And lodg'd in faithful Memory's deepest cell.
 But ah, by passion's gust, how soon effac'd,
 Or weaken'd ere it strikes and warms the soul !

We view, we weep, perhaps, a neighbour's fall ;
 Turn pale, as the procession moves along
 In sad and silent pomp ; to bear the dead
 To his dark home, to hail the light no more !
 The hearse, the coffin, and the sable plumes,
 Death's awful ensigns waving o'er the bier,
 Arrests the heart a-while, with trembling awe !
 Soon as the solemn scene has pass'd our eye,
 Lull'd in soft Pleasure's lap, or Folly's dream,
 Quick dies the weak impression, left behind
 One moment on our heart ; how like the trace

Of

Of the swift arrow, gliding through the air,
The almost viewless path, mark'd by the keel,
Swift bounding thro' the opening-furrow'd wave.

That stone informs me, by a random stroke
The hapless wretch expir'd who sleeps below ;
Swell'd with warm vigorous life, each bounding
This hour—the next, an icy clod of clay ; [vein
Sudden and swift the blow—the victim doom'd
To breathe his last, ere yet his closing eye
Or faltering tongue could bid a last adieu
To his sad friends, who gaze and stand around
Surpriz'd, to weep his unsuspected fall.

Say, was the blow fortuitous that whelm'd,
Instant, the wretch in dust ?—Recal the word—
'Tis blasphemy to Heav'n ; it takes the rein,
And wrests it from Omnipotence, which guides,
Controls, directs, whate'er is done below ;
A hand unseen still acts behind the cloud,
Wings the dire shaft, instructs it where to fall,
Whose bosom next its flying point shall wound.
How sure the aim ! the hand, tho' unperceiv'd,
That arms its steel with death—tooo much rever'd
Fortune and Chance are deities ador'd
In Folly's pagan school ; no sovereigns these,
But ministers alone, of power divine,
Whose voice they hear, whose summons they obey,
Subservient vassals only of his will.

How thin the weak partition that divides
This from the other world ; earth from the skies,
Time from eternity—the fragile thread
Of our existence shiver'd by a breeze,
A breath afunder cuts ; our little span,
(Its end and its beginning closely join'd)
By moments measur'd oftener than by years.
A minute's flight, the twinkling of an eye,
Bears us from life to death ; the sons of joy,
And tenants of the darkness, in an hour.
One night, in all her gaiety, beheld
The young Corinna sparkling at a ball ;
Each youth was raptur'd, every humble knee
Bent low to pay due homage to her charms.
But, ah, how frail is beauty in its bloom !
How transient all its graces ! those fair eyes,
Which opening, lent new lustre to the day,
Saw not a second morn—the door of life
How near the glomy portal of the grave !

Nicander smiling, view'd his ample dome,
The front extended, and wide-spreading wings,
The gilded sashes open'd to receive
And catch the golden morning's orient ray !
Yet, ah ! forbid to spend one joyous hour
Beneath the stately roof—His front sublime,
Vivid his eye ; in youth's fresh flow'ry bloom,
Breathless he sunk, and drop'd into a grave,

Deaf to the voice of harmony ; the knell,
The only mournful musick of a tomb. [prime,
Gay Theron, flush'd with health, in manhood's
And wantoning in Heaven's indulgent smile,
Had plan'd his chambers to invite repose !
His gardens all with every beauty stor'd,
And elegantly gay—here open'd wide
The stretching vistas—there quite warm with life,
The breathing busts, the pride of Greece and
Majestic rose, to decorate the scene ! [Rome,
But while his laurels spread, his myrtles bloom'd,
The funeral yew and cypress are forgot,
To dress his herse, and strew around his tomb.
But in the summit of his short-liv'd joys
An arrow, launch'd from Fate's unerring string,
Blasts all his hopes, and lodg'd him in a cell
Prepar'd by Death to damp all human pride ;
His vast possessions now, and boasts so long,
Cramp'd to the breadth and length of a cold
grave;
His buildings finish'd, and their owner dust.
Weeping these dread events, these tragic turns
Of joy and wretchedness, that eye sublime
Which with one glance the earth's wide circuit
views,
Even now may gaze vast numbers in despair,
Each comfort lost, bath'd in Affliction's tears.

The

The empty bubble, and the transient shade,
 True images of life, and life in bloom.
 Misfortune's tents, how oft do we behold
 With darkness cover'd, such as once o'erwhelm'd
 Ægypt's benighted sons; when wing'd with death
 The great avenging angel's arrows flew
 Amidst their hosts, and wither'd all their pride!
 Some from a chair of down have sunk to sleep
 Next moment in a chilling couch of clay,
 Deaf to the piercing shrieks of weeping friends
 That sigh around their bed—how many breathe
 A last and parting groan, who sat reclin'd
 Beneath the arbour's cool refreshing shade!
 To drink the balmy sweets, and feast the eye
 With all the beauties of the flow'ry scene!
 What numbers, gently sailing down the stream
 Of pleasure, while the nectar'd bowl inspir'd
 Gay transports, and soft music sooth'd their ear,
 Have sunk into a tomb; no time secure,
 No place a refuge from Death's lifted arm.

Disasters infinite, which Wisdom's eye
 Cannot foresee, prevented by no care,
 In ambush wait each hour, to work our doom.
 A steed, when starting quick, may tumble down
 His rider in the dust—a falling dome
 Arrest him in the street, when passing by,
 And whelm him in its ruins—fatal oft

The lightest tile as is the murd'ring ball.

So frail is human life, the thread so weak
On which it hangs, that not the storm alone;
The soft and gentlest breeze can boast a power
To shatter and dissolve the cobweb-string.
That tyrant Death can give a fatal charge
To a small seed, a grape-stone or a fly,
His ministers below, to stop the wheels
Of brittle life, and lodge us in a tomb.
The bees envenom'd, piercing viewless sting,
As deadly often, as the warrior's steel.
If Heaven ordains, our blessings shall be snares !
Its smiles shall wound, our very comforts kill ;
The means of saving life become its bane.
How often does the noxious air we breathe
Prove mortal, and the food that should sustain
And nourish life, convey us to our grave.
Death, like a mole, is working, tho' unseen,
And whets his arrows keenest when we smile ;
Then to be dreaded most, when least we fear.
Our out-works first attack'd, he next assails
Our deep intrenchments, then lays closer siege
To the strong citadel of life, the heart ;
Which now no longer able to sustain
The last fierce onset, the victorious foe
Enters, and lays our fortress in the dust.
The smallest chasm may open yet a door

'Thro' which our foe may creep—a needle's point
 As fatal as a lance : the crimson stream
 That issues from our heart, and glides along
 From circling vein to vein, whate'er retards,
 Obstructs, accelerates the ruby tide
 That ebbs or flows too fast, the wheels of life
 Sudden are stop'd—the senseless dull machine,
 Or cold, or burning with too fierce a flame,
 Forgets their motion—one small pin remov'd,
 That binds and close connects man's brittle frame,
 The fabrick totters, and a second lost,
 In pieces flies the ruined whole.

To dangers thus expos'd, each fearful hour
 Let man reflect upon how frail a hold
 His life depends ; how unforeseen the day
 That calls from life to death ; and timely warn'd
 For our last summons to the grave, prepare ;
 Without this caution we, like wretches, stand
 And sleep upon the top-mast's reeling head,
 Viewing the horrid gulph that yawns below,
 Opening its waves to overwhelm us as we fall.
 Can then the bosom steal one moment's joy
 From this tremendous height, when tempests roar,
 And underneath his eye vast oceans roll ;
 But if to Wisdom's lectures we attend,
 And Virtue's cordial sweets our soul inspire,
 Affliction's keenest shafts unheeded fly

Across our peace ; the firm and spotless mind
 Smiles at each threatening danger that surrounds,
 But cannot terrify—a guiltless heart
 Makes death a welcome guest, the grave a prize.

See there the great momentous truth is seal'd
 With Fate's own signet—the sad marble stone
 That graces yonder weeping pillar, hung
 With the dread arms of death, directs my eye
 To drop a tear o'er young Sophronia's tomb !
 Herself, alas, expiring, while she gave
 Life, which she could not lengthen, to her babe.
 Beneath a parent's throes, she breathes her last,
 The tender infant smiling, as she dies,
 Permitted scarce to breathe a soft adieu
 To the dear pledge that bore her to a grave ;
 A corpse and mother, in one transient hour ;
 Withered the root, soon as the flower disclos'd
 Its opening sweets, and just began to bloom.

† Thy monument, oh just enjoy'd and lost,
 Fairly distinguish'd from the rural stone
 That shades the relics of the vulgar dead,
 Costly the marble, delicate the steel
 That plann'd thy breathless image, sleeping now
 Cold in the arms of death : the hand how kind,
 How generous was the heart, whose feeling-love
 Contriv'd the model which transmits thy name
 And his despair, to ages yet unborn !

† Alluding to the Monument of Mrs. Stonhouse, in the great Church at Northampton.

Each pensive figure, weeping o'er the tomb,
 An emblem of some virtue, which adorn'd
 The living saint—thy innocence pourtray'd
 By the white virgin marble that confines
 Thy hallow'd dust ; the beauties that once glow'd,
 Blush'd on each cheek, and sparkled from thy eye,
 Figur'd how fairly by the polish'd stone !
 But ah, what art, what chissel had a power
 In lively animating strokes to grave
 Manners, so gentle, sanctity so pure,
 That grace of action, elegance of mind,
 Goodness unfeign'd, devotion's sober zeal ;
 All snatch'd away—and buried in her grave !

How vain, alas, thy soft endearing charms,
 Thy lively beauties, and thy sparkling eye,
 The bloom of bridal youth, to ward the blow
 That stretch'd thee in the dust ; death's richest prey.
 Superior birth and honours want a power
 To save the frail possessors from a tomb,
 All destin'd victims to that savage foe
 Who shakes alike the cottage and the throne,
 Mingling the monarch's with the peasant's clay,
 Whelms crowns in dunghills—dignity in dust.
 How fruitless the esteem and pitying love,
 Of thy selected friends—the warm embrace
 Of a lov'd consort, pouring out his soul
 O'er thy pale trembling cheeks, to catch a groan

From thy expiring breath ; to wipe the tear
Dewing thy languid eye ; destin'd, how soon
By death's cold hand for ever to be clos'd.
How unavailing the soft moving cries
Of thy weak tender infants to prolong
A mother's life, and guard her from the tomb ?

Tho' piety, tho' virtues most sublime,
And innocence unstain'd, boast not a power
To rescue, and relieve us from the urn ;
They can do more—from death they draw the sting:
We welcome his keen arrows as they fly,
The grave our wish ; its chambers our repose ;
Where sleep our joys at once, and sorrows too.

This the still language of the lamps that blaze,
Silently speaking, round Sophronia's tomb ;
'The solemn purport of the heart that flames,
The palms that flourish, and the glittering crown,
On the sad stone so movingly display'd.

How happy (yet how transient was the joy)
The partner of her once endearing smiles,
Soft sharer of his bed, and fortunes too.
One heart inform'd 'em both ; the blissful flow
Of sweetest music, harmoniz'd each soul ;
No grating notes, no harsh discordant string
Breaking the unisons, which smooth'd the lyre.
How filken was the yoke to such a pair ?
What blessings twisted in such nuptial bands ?

Neught

Nought wanted to complete the bliss supreme
Of human life, and perfect all its joys,
But a dear smiling progeny to crown
Their hopes, surrounding each lov'd parent's knee.
While multiply'd, themselves they may behold
In each fair image, stamp'd upon the clay,
The fruits of mutual love and chaste desires.
Seen, ev'ry lively grace that once adorn'd
The mother's cheek, bloom in her offspring's smile.

This her fond ardent wish—but ah how blind
To the close hid events, that lye conceal'd
In dark futurity! untaught to know
What would augment, or what our peace destroy.
How often does mistaken passion breathe
A sigh for comforts, fatal in their end,
Which please awhile, but only please to kill.
Sophronia falls—not by her wish deny'd,
But the more fatal grant of her desire.
Tho' sons and daughters to a parent's eye
Seem flow'ry chaplets, in their beauty's bloom,
Breathing their sweetest fragrance, Death may find
A means the lovely garland to unfold,
And mix a venom in each scented flower.
Does heaven with-hold the bliss for which we pour
An ardent sigh—in mercy 'tis with-held!
The wish indulg'd, perhaps had dealt a wound
To our heart's peace—each bliss of life destroy'd.

Man's

Man's sickly appetite too often loaths
The wholesome viand, and with eager haste
Snatches the morsel doom'd to be his bane.

Where fancy dreams of pure unmingled show'rs
Of solid comforts, sage experience finds
Thrown in its happiness a cup of gall.
In our choice ointment lurks a noxious fly,
Which taints, and quite corrupts its rich perfume :
With wormwood dash'd life's sweetest cordial joys.
The gifts of fortune, and her treacherous smiles,
How oft the parents of our deepest woe ?

Let prudence then instruct us not to prize
This earth's unfelt felicities too high ;
They pierce us most when promising to give
The strongest consolations to the soul !
Leave to unerring wisdom to dispose
Th' events of life and death ; nor human will
Be suffer'd to oppose the schemes divine ;
Breathing no wish, which thwarts the wise designs
And kind resolves of heaven, to make us blest,
Each pang we feel, the weight of ev'ry woe,
Not owing to heaven's will, but to our own.

That plain and humble marble, scarcely rais'd
Above the ground's cold surface, seems to own
Some scanty fund, frugality's own hand
Sparing the cost, had built the modest tomb.
With nicest touch, no sculptor's steel had hewn

The

The serious monument, nor crest, nor arms,
Nor pensive angels weeping o'er the grave.
Th' inscription hardly legible, effac'd
By relatives sad steps, who often press'd
The solemn stone which hid the dust below.

But who, the sleeping dead?—a nearer view
Informs me, that it shades the poor remains
Of a once pious father, snatch'd away
From his lov'd helpless orphans, ere matur'd
By age, as yet not blest in fortune's smile,
A parent's watchful eye and tender care,
Their soul with love of virtue had inspir'd.

View here a scene of complicated woe !
With dread solemnity, and solemn awe,
A dying chamber always has a power
To touch, and melt the melancholy heart,
Which joins in sadness to augment the gloom.

Whose eye forbears to drop a silent tear,
Viewing the faithful consort, tender fire,
Th' indulgent master, and the pitying friend,
Gasping in death?—Learn'd art has emptied all
Its phials, unavailing to relieve
The weak expiring mourner—the disease
Mocks the physician's skill ; with rapid speed
Hasting to execute its dread command,
Life's silver chord determin'd to divide,
And, ah ! the dearer tye of nuptial love.

A train of menial servants weep around
 Their master's couch; whose past indulgence wakes
 Their sad and silent grief, and adds a sting
 Embittering all their woes, as he expires.
 His friends, who gladden'd oft his social hours
 With their enliv'ning converse; ah! what vain
 And helpless comforts now: a sigh, a tear,
 A look of pity, and a breathing prayer,
 Pour'd from each pensive heart, the sole relief
 A crowd of mourning friends can now bestow.

In darker shades to paint the gloomy scene,
 Ah, breathe a sigh of sadness to survey
 Around an agonizing parent's chair
 His weeping orphans, pouring out their souls
 In loud complaints, half-drown'd in deep despair.
 ' Is heav'n relentless then, the unpitying sky
 ' Deaf to our sorrows? has it left in store
 ' No blessing to abate and calm our woes?
 ' Does a kind father leave us to bemoan
 ' Our helpless state, without one glimm'ring ray
 ' Of hope to cheer us? dreadfully expos'd
 ' To the world's threat'ning dangers, fortune's
 frowns,
 ' No refuge near to shield us from its storms!'

But ah, how faint these wailings, when compar'd
 With the deep anguish of the widow'd fair,
 O'erwhelm'd beneath a sea of frantic woes,

Where

Where ev'ry comfort, each soft joy expires.
In her the lover weeps, the spouse complains ;
The wretched mother yearns—In her unite
Of each distress the complicated streams ;
Her pangs augmented by a sad review
Of days and months and rapt'rous years enjoy'd
In the dear friendship and inspiring smiles
Of him, in bursting sighs, she now bemoans.
Say, in what bosom now can she repose
Her confidence ? where open all her soul ?
Or find a cordial friend her steps to guide
Thro' life's dark mazes, of his help bereav'd,
Whose fair example and paternal care
Had led her safely, with her infant train,
In the smooth pleasing paths that point to bliss.
I view her now quite fainting o'er the voice
That once was sweetest music—to inspire
And breathe soft comfort to her soul no more.
See her now trembling under dread amaze
And fearful apprehension, as she views
Death creeping to his couch—With pious care
From his pale cheeks she wipes the clammy dew,
Now rests his sinking head upon her arm,
Or clasps it to her bosom ! See, she throws
A look of speechless ardor, wild surprize,
Upon his livid lips and half-clos'd eyes,
Sinking in death—Each glowing passion beats

30 MEDITATIONS

A feeling fondness ; while her tortur'd soul
With exquisite distress and pangs is torn.

The panting sufferer, patient, calm, resign'd,
Submissive to that power whose sov'reign will
Or lengthens or contracts man's doubtful span,
Beholds with sorrow each sad pensive eye
His pangs bemoan—and mingles tear with tear.
But ah ! the deepest forest groan is pour'd
Warm from his throbbing heart, as he surveys
His widow'd consort and her orphan train
Weeping around his couch—A cheering gleam
Shot from the heavens, now soon to be his own,
In the short interval of pangs, relieves
His fainting bosom ; opening to his eye
The scene of glory, and the crown prepar'd
For suff'ring virtue, seldom in despair.
Conscious integrity, a life unstain'd,
Softens the heart's distress and calms its pains ;
Supports, and lends a dignity to woe ;
Draws out the shaft from the soul's rankling wound.

Weak life, no longer able to inspire
The tott'ring fabric, shook with ev'ry breeze,
Collects its feeble forces, all in one
United, the last effort to exert
Of nature, striving faintly to retard
Death's arrows, levell'd at his panting heart.
He now attempts to raise his drooping head,

And refts it on his pillow—now extends
 His hand to his sad servants, bath'd in tears,
 Feeling his pangs, and sharing all his woes ;
 Now takes a short affecting laft farewell
 Of all his penfive friends, who weep around
 His dying couch—Now in his languid arms
 He clasps his confort, clinging to his breast;
 And a kind, parting, ardent kifs beftow'd
 On his dear fighting orphans, thus he breathes
 From his weak foul this warm paternal prayer—
 ‘ I die, my children—but that guardian Pow’r
 ‘ That views you from above, fhall throw his fhield
 ‘ Of pity round your head—your fteps fhall guide
 ‘ Through life’s enfnaring paths—Altho’ you lofe
 ‘ An earthly parent, haft’ning to his grave,
 ‘ A father, full of mercies, lives above,
 ‘ From whose divine regard and cheering fmiles,
 ‘ Which eafe the broken, calm the throbbing heart,
 ‘ Nothing can feparate but a breaft obfcure’d
 ‘ By infidel diftruff, with vice diftain’d.’

But now his fpirit faints—his fault’ring tongue
 No longer lends its fuccour, while the foul
 In filence breathes its anguifh—A fhort pause
 That interven’d his ebbing life recalls,
 While fainting, and with pain, his fault’ring voice
 Thus fpeaks in broken accents—‘ To thy care
 ‘ Dear part’ner of my bed, I now refign

‘ Thefe

‘ These tender pledges of our love,—my joy,
‘ While life remain’d, to dwell upon their smiles :
‘ Oh, guard their youth, direct them how to tread
‘ Safe thro’ the paths of virtue—Thee I leave
‘ Sore burden’d with the heavy weight of woe :
‘ But that kind pitying Pow’r who ever pleads
‘ The mournful widow’s cause, and throws a wing
‘ Of soft compassion round the couch of pain,
‘ Shall shield thee in distress ; his goodness pour
‘ The oil of gladness in thy languid soul,
‘ His promise certain, never to forsake
‘ The wretch with sorrow pin’d, and whelm’d in
‘ This ratify’d by heav’n’s strong golden seal [tears.
‘ My fainting spirit cheers—let it revive
‘ Thy bosom too, and rescue from despair
‘ My life’s best part, while fleeting life remain’d.
‘ Parent of mercy, hear ! as now I breathe
‘ My soul into thy hands—oh cast a gleam
‘ Of mercy from thy heaven, as I expire !
‘ Robb’d of an earthly father, I resign
‘ To thy protecting and paternal care
‘ My weeping fatherless’—He adds no more,
But fainting, backward on his pillow falls,
And lies some moments in a numbing trance,
Bereft of sense and life—How well compar’d
To the dim taper, which, e’er it expires
Sudden re-kindling, shoots a parting blaze,

And

And leaps into a bright and quiv'ring flame.
So life e'er quite extinct, essay'd once more
To look abroad, his eyelids to unclose
Swimming in death—Again he faintly strives,
But vain th' attempt one parting sigh to breathe,
Which dy'd away before it reach'd the ear
Of those in solemn woe that weep'd around
His couch, bedew'd with streams of gushing tears.
Yet still the husband, friend, and father lives
In each pale livid look—affection still
Glow'd in his visage and soft smiling eye,
How soon to drop its beams within a grave!
But, ah! the fondest glance reserv'd to throw
On his lov'd speechless orphans e'er he dies;
One parting pitying look (he could no more)
Gleam'd on his widow'd relict, whelm'd in tears,
While living, ne'er beheld without a smile;
Fixt in this posture, and his eyes uprais'd
To heaven, and bidding earth a long adieu,
They close in shades of death, and shine their last.

Sorrow no longer silent, dumb no more,
Bursts out in loud laments—Each bosom tore
With racking torture and tumult'ous pain,
Refuses comfort, till all-healing time,
That mitigates and calms all human woes,
Gave leave to each sad breast in sighs to breathe
Its latent sorrows, and the bleeding pangs

'That cleft each throbbing bosom ;—say, oh where
Shall wretchedness retire, to what kind pow'r
Affliction bend the knee ; into whose breast
The widow and the helpless orphan pour
Their gushing tears in gulphs of anguish drown'd !

Daughters and sons of sorrow ! lift your thoughts
Up to yon golden heaven, where sits enthron'd
All nature's awful God, present to hear
The mourner's sigh, and loose the pris'ners chain ;
Weak every other help, to him retire
For shelter, when no cov'ring else is near
'To shade you from distress—his strength your guide ;
His arm your stay and safeguard, journeying on
From life to death, from childhood to the tomb.

In pensive thought from stone to stone I rove,
Grav'd with memento's pointing to my own ;
Sad silent preachers, that record the doom
Of those who liv'd like me, but now are dust ;
Death's mouldering victims, serving to adorn
His triumphs and attest his sov'reign sway !
While these kind monitors in heaps around
Arrest my eye, inviting me to weigh
Their solemn purport—truths which they unfold ;
A venerable bust appears in view,
Whose grave and sable aspect seems to wear
The character inscrib'd of sober age.
The ornamented marble, rising high

Above

Above the low and humble stones that shade
The vulgar dead, in life must sure denote
Some nobler station—nearer now I draw
To the recording marble ; and enquire
Or who, or what beneath its surface lies ?
This tells me, he who sleeps within this grave
Was once possessor and the happy lord
Of ample manors, by the hand of care
And industry enrich'd the fertile soil.
In its gay periods, just in manhood's bloom,
Summon'd from life to death—from rooms of state
Hurried away to lodge within a tomb.

Say, did his eye not often want repose ;
His food the bread of care, his visage pal'd
With anxious vigilance ; too short the day
For his laborious toils, in wider bounds
To fence his large possessions ; field to field
Adjoining, to augment the needless stores
That wise and frugal nature ne'er demands ;
Unsatiate, 'till his golden treasures swell
Ample, as boundless as his wild desires !

Mark worldly wisdom's folly, how it cheats
The bubbled heart—how childish, yet how sage !
An idiot baby prudence, when it weighs
Time with Eternity—a fleeting hour
With ages, destin'd never to expire.

While all the wheels of action smoothly glide,

And time has kindly ripen'd and matur'd
His fav'rite schemes that promis'd to compleat
Each bliss his bosom panted to enjoy :
Is that important hour upon the wing,
Which drops upon his head those cordial sweets
For which he long has languish'd ?—See on high
'The awful power enthron'd, whose eye derides
This Babel builder, mocks his wisdom's dream ;
Death touches the thin bubble—With a stroke
The weak and labour'd fabric turns to dust.
The cobweb thread indeed so finely spun,
Yet broke with greater ease, was sweep'd away
In one short moment—all the airy schemes
Of this projector, wisdom's learned fool,
This grey-hair'd infant, cradled child in years
(Ah pin the bib close o'er the sage's gown)
All sunk and buried with him in a grave.
Just in the triumph of his finish'd fame ;
Lord of earth's pleasures in the morning's dawn,
A prey to worms before its ev'ning clos'd.

Say ye who waited round him, from the string
Of destiny, when the barb'd arrow flew,
What the sad silent language of the soul,
Bursting the bars of life—Hear then its voice,
Its broken accents utter'd in despair—

• Dreadful thy sting, oh death ; thy pois'nous dart
• How piercing, and how cruel when it wounds

• The

- ‘ The careless bosom ! fonder of the toys
- ‘ That glitter for a moment, than the crown
- ‘ Whose splendor, and whose light shall never fade !
- ‘ With vast eternity when years are weigh’d,
- ‘ How pond’rous is the scale that lifts on high
- ‘ That bubble time, and tosses it in air !
- ‘ Where now the joys of fleeting life ! oh where
- ‘ The sweets of boasted science ! useless, vain
- ‘ All other knowledge, if the soul, untaught
- ‘ In wisdom’s school, forgets its main design ;
- ‘ Prefers a moment’s trifle to the joys
- ‘ That bloom above for ever—Heav’n, oh spare
- ‘ A few short minutes yet !—he fain would breathe
- ‘ A few vain wishes more—O Death allow
- ‘ The respite of an hour—then groan’d his last—
- ‘ The arrow was let fly—Convulsions shake
- ‘ His trembling nerves, and in a moment tear
- ‘ Frail life asunder—the weak tott’ring frame
- ‘ In agonies dissolv’d, returns to dust.”

Say, is the silver wedge, the golden ore,
 The rubies, or the brilliant’s sparkling stone
 Dug from each India’s mines, a worthy prize
 To gratify ambition’s proud desire ?
 That peace which blooms in virtue’s flow’ry soil,
 Shades all the lustre, quenches ev’ry beam
 Shot from the faded gem—the regal crown,
 The laurel wreath that binds the victor’s brow, :

Weigh'd with the bosom's transport, *baby-toys*.

Turn then the wishful eye above, and view
The palms hung out from yonder op'ning skies;
For these contend and pant; the treasures these
In heaven's green verdant groves that ever bloom.

Riches, whose fair inviting charms allure
'The soul to earth from heaven, hang a weight
On man's affections, striving to attain
Superior lasting treasures worth his care.
Say, what the bliss they promis'd to bestow?
Accumulated anguish, when the hour,
'The destin'd period snatches them away.
Into the cup, instead of cordial pour'd
Of ebbing life, a poison they infuse,
And on our dying pillow plant a thorn.

Some e'er they make their exit from the cares
That burden human life, have stretch'd their span
'To the full length and period heav'n assigns
For man to breathe on earth—these sure have sign'd
A peace with nature's God, engag'd his smiles
E'er age approach'd, when youth was in its bloom,
Or nature languish'd and their strength became
Sorrow and labour—dreadful the delay
That prompts us not to shed a mournful tear
Of penitence, for guilt yet unatton'd,
'Till the weak eye scarce darts a sickly beam
From its dull orb in darkness almost clos'd,

AMONG THE TOMBS. 39

The night but just distinguish'd from the day.

Be crush'd, ambition! drop thy waving plume.
Pride trodden in the dust, the toys resign'd
Which honour, birth and dignity demand ;
The heart in pieces rent, the humble knee
Low bent, in adorations to the sky,
Best suited to their state, who prostrate fall,
Now breathe a sigh, now shed a tear of woe,
And pant for joys in heaven that ever bloom.

When age has wither'd youth's fair florid brow,
And turn'd the cheek of vigorous manhood pale ;
How vain the effort then within the soul
To plant the seeds of virtue—to begin
To live, when faint and dropping in a tomb
The deep impressions fix'd upon the heart
By guilty habits rooted there by time ;
By months, nor years, perhaps an age effac'd,
Maintain their conquests ruling uncontroll'd.
The spots that mark and stain the leopard's skin
And Æthiop's cheek, wash'd off with lesser pains.

See the dread precipice on which he stands
Unmindful of his god, till trembling age
Awakes his sleeping terrors—How deplor'd
And wretched, whom a wonder scarce can save.
But, oh ! not yet abandon'd to despair.
Rest on his healing love, whose potent voice
In a short moment calms the mourner's pain,

Relieves the bosom's pangs, and drives away
The anguish that corrodes the wretch's breast.

Yet, ah, be wise in time, nor trust your fate
To the dark doubtful hazard of an hour !
Eternity the stake—the bliss of heaven,
Or pangs of hell the prize for which you toil.
Tho' vig'rous youth now blooming in its prime,
And dancing blood beats high in ev'ry vein ;
That pow'r who lengthens, or contracts our days,
May burst the thread of life, nor time allow
For the sad soul to breathe one fervent prayer,
E'er learnt the useful science—*how to dye.*
Catch then the solemn moments as they fly,
When fled for ever lost—youth's rosy prime
Death, unperceiv'd, may wither in an hour ;
The shaft of death in secret aim be hurl'd,
Destin'd to wound and lodge within our heart.

Permit not then the morning of your days,
The bloom of youthful life, to glide away
In folly's wanton dreams ! Your golden hours,
If well improv'd, convey upon their wing
Treasures immortal, deathless, large and pure ;
Wreaths ever verdant ; crowns that never fade,
Woven above by cherubs to adorn,
And bind around the pious victor's brow !
Let then the morning's sun and ev'ning's shade
Find you employ'd in wisdom's useful schemes,

Which

AMONG THE TOMBS. 41

Which reason, man's enlighten'd teacher, plans;
Not idly active in the search of joys,
That dreaming fancy dresses up in charms,
Which catch the eye and glitter for a while,
Just glare and vanish; just appear and dye;
Thin, airy, light—the *shadow of a shade*.

While loit'ring on, insensible and gay,
That fell destroyer death, unmark'd the blow
Whence springs the shaft, may then be whetting
Its point directed to the victim's heart. [keen

One day by chance I view'd a careless jay,
(Ah how unconscious of his death so near)
Dressing his varied plumes—from bough to bough
As now the rover skipp'd, the fowler's eye
Beheld him sportive, and with levell'd aim
His tube directing, pours a leaden show'r
From the discharging engine's bursting fire;
Swift as the light'ning thro' the wounded air
Flies the wing'd death; and in a moment lays
The panting victim flutt'ring on the ground.

Just such his fate who flights the present hour,
And trusts to-morrow's dawn to reconcile
And seal his peace with heav'n; but e'er the light
Of the next morning opens, from the string
The arrow bounds, with a commission arm'd
To lay the wise projector in the dust.
Its promis'd debts to-morrow seldom pays,

But

But often cheats the credulous *to-day*.

A courtier, smiling only to delude,

That gulls each fool who thought his vow sincere.

In life's last stage, some drop into the tomb

With piety replete, and full of days ;

By wisdom taught to lay in timely stores,

Provisions to regale, and feast the soul

Thro' endless ages—fit to entertain

Possessors of that heaven they now enjoy.

The miser's wealth for ever on the wing,

The short-liv'd boast and treasures of an hour ;

Once fled, quite lost for ever—while the hand

That deals its charities, has found a way

To multiply its riches, and encrease

Those funds it seems to lavish and impair ;

Our constant kind companions these, that guide

The soul in triumph to the gates of bliss.

Short life expir'd within the solemn gloom

And peaceful habitations of the dead,

Sleeps our religious dust, to sigh no more

Beneath the pond'rous galling weight of care ;

Escap'd the latent toils, which oft conspir'd

To wound our peace and blast each human joy.

In these retreats of death, these silent cells

Of lasting rest that quiet all our woes ;

The head forgets its pain, the eye bedew'd

No more with gushing tears ; the heart reliev'd

From those convulsive pangs, which often tore
 Its strings asunder—here the body sleeps
 Untortur'd by the slow and ling'ring pains
 That wasted fading life; each deeper wound
 Escap'd, that death alone can heal and cure;
 Here dangers cease to threaten and alarm
 The soul with boding fears; here downy peace,
 Softens their silent couch from all the cares
 Embittering life, secur'd their still repose.
 Rest then ye sacred relics, pain'd no more
 Within this quiet hospitable gloom;
 Your slumbers sweet and gentle, till the day
 When the last trumpet wakes you from the grave,
 Thro' your dark mansions pours that solemn sound,
Arise ye dead! Rekindling dust arise!
 Shake off the chains of death, that holds its slaves
 Captive no more—See, see a golden light
 Springs from above, with life upon its wings,
 Heav'n's glory darting round a radiant beam,
 That cheers the solemn darkness of the tomb.

To these how calm the eve of ebbing life;
 How smiling and serene, the sun that clos'd
 Their eyes in death? tho' fainting as they view'd
 Their last great enemy approach, how rais'd
 Their chearful hopes in that last solemn hour;
 Reflecting (as they bid a last adieu
 To the world's transient glories ere they die)

On

44 M E D I T A T I O N S

On a Redeemer's love, who dy'd to give,
And rose again to seal, their bosom's peace ;
A Saviour smiling, and a God appeas'd,
Sin pardon'd, blifs assur'd, and death disarm'd,
On his own arrow destin'd to expire.

Where now thy plume, ambition ? or thy boast,
Oh wealth ? or where that airy bubble fame ?
Short momentary shadow ? honour's blaze ?
As vain the proudest trophies of renown.
Glitt'ring and fair to-day—to-morrow dust.

Say in this panting struggle, when the soul
Is ready to desert its house of clay ;
Can fame its anguish soften, titles smooth
The clammy couch of death, or scepters yield
A balm to stop its agonizing pains ?
In this sad solemn scene, heav'n's chosen few,
No terrors felt, enjoy a sweet repose ;
Leaning their fainting heads upon that arm
That bears the saint in triumph to the sky ;
Plucks out the sting of death, whose sable plumes
The spade, the coffin, and the wither'd bone,
The spoils and trophies of the tyrant's rage,
Wave on his dreadful ensigns now no more.
New-modell'd from the grave its tenants spring,
Pregnant with life each animated tomb.

Here rest awhile ye pious silent shades ;
And joy that nature's struggles now are o'er !

Your

AMONG THE TOMBS. 45

Your bodies sleep in dust, while on the wing
 Your souls are mounting to yon azure skies,
 Bright scenes, invifible to mortal view.
 Instead of weeping friends that figh around
 Your dying couch, how pleasing to behold
 A train of guardian angels point the way
 That leads you up to heav'n's immortal bowers,
 Thro' tracks of golden light and worlds unknown!
 The gloomy vale of tears, the realms of woe
 Forgot for ever, as you now arrive
 On the bright frontiers, at the fapphire doors,
 Spontaneous op'ning that direct the eye,
 Where fits the awful Deity enthron'd.
 Here mufic breathing all its foftest ftrains
 From the full choir of hymning feraphs pour'd,
 Thus hales your bleft approach—' Lift up your
 ' Ye gates that on your golden hinges turn ; [heads
 ' Ye everlasting doors an ent'rance yield
 ' To heav'n's elected faints, the heirs of blifs.'

Here let us leave awhile, beneath the gloom
 And darknefs of the grave, your fleeping clay
 From tears, from danger, from diftrefs convey'd
 Up to that Paradife, whose gardens bloom
 With fpring eternal, wreaths that never fade ;
 One pure, unvaried, endless fcene of joy.
 Angels your bright companions, while you fmile
 Around heav'n's radiant throne, your prefent joy

Past

Past utterance—yet augmented by a view
Of greater and more cordial bliss to come.

The impious tongue of folly may deride,
The infidel his pois'nous arrows throw
To wound and stain that virtue which he scorns;
Be it my wish, when summon'd to a grave,
My wiser choice the good man's fate to share,
His peace in life—his raptures when he dies.

What awful figure that which strikes my eye
With blazing 'scutcheons that adorn his tomb?
His elevated statue, soaring high
Above each vulgar bust, assumes an air
Of proud importance, seeming to deride
The fordid dust of those that sleep below;
The sword, the falchion, the portended spear,
Dire instruments of death, that stain the field
With sanguine slaughter in a dread array;
Magnificence how awful, spread a gleam
Of terror, threat'ning round the warrior's tomb!

The strokes of art, the animating steel,
The ostentatious ensigns that adorn
The hero's marble blazing o'er his urn;
Methods how vain to bribe the vote of fame,
The sculptur'd stone unable to secure
With all its boast a posthumous renown?
The patriot in his country's cause who bleeds,
A monument more durable and strong,

Unites each grateful heart that shall defy
The tooth and rage of time, and fairer blooms,
When the proud statue and the crumbling bust
In ruins whelm'd, to ashes shall be turn'd.

Such be the monument I wish to rear
Over my breathless dust ; within the breast
Of each surviving friend let me inscribe
A fair memorial of my guiltless fame,
A life not lent in vain, that strove to please
By kind munificence and cordial love,
And every act which charity inspires.

When lodg'd beneath the shadow of a tomb,
The weeping poor, oft passing near my grave,
Shall thus, in tears, their grateful sorrows pour
Around my peaceful urn—' Within the gloom
' Of this dark cell, the hallow'd relicks sleep
' Of one, whose kindly love and pitying care,
' When sad distress had chil'd the aking heart,
' Oft stop'd the sigh, and cheer'd the face of woe.'
' His tender visits oft my pangs reliev'd
' When languishing upon a bed of pain ;
' Pale, meagre famine, by his generous hand,
' Rais'd from its cell, and rescued from despair !
' Oft have his friendly counsels been a guide
' To my perplexing thoughts, and pour'd the oil
' Of gladness on my spirit, broke with cares !
' Each bliss of life, each comfort I enjoy,

' Each

' Each consolation which my bosom feels,
 ' That now I breathe and live—all, all I owe
 ' To his kind pitying eye, that boundless love
 ' That render'd life a blessing worth my care !'

Let then the ignorant, the once prophane,
 Lift up their thoughts to Heaven, as o'er my tomb
 They shed a grateful tear, and thus bemoan
 The ashes of their friend—Beneath this stone
 ' Sleep his remains, whose piety and care
 ' Watch'd o'er my soul, and guarded it from snares;
 ' Still I lament the wanton heedless hours
 ' That flatter'd, and that hurried me to tread
 ' The smooth and pleasing paths that led me on
 ' To quick perdition—trembling, still I view
 ' The dreadful precipice on which I hung,
 ' Th' amazing height, the roaring gulph below;
 ' Where, plung'd into the deep abyss, I soon
 ' Had fell precipitate, without the aid
 ' Of his wise admonitions, which sustain'd
 ' My steps, and check'd my folly's wild career!
 ' Whose precepts still sit warm upon my heart,
 ' And breathe into my ear the sweetest sound.'

Say ! are we fond our glories to convey
 To latest time?—to great as well as small
 Expanded wide the door that leads to fame !
 Be it our warm ambition's ardent aim,
 By sanctity of life no vice has stain'd

To claim a crown, to get our names enroll'd
 In heaven's bright annals ; this the noblest far
 Of all distinctions ; fairer than the wreath
 That binds the conqu'rors brow ; and darts a light
 Brighter than that which blazes from a throne !
 The short memorials of all wordly fame
 Time shall obliterate ; the voice of those
 Whose int'rest we espouse, and well-lay'd plan,
 Harmonious now their eloquence, how soon
 Shall death consign to silence in the grave ?
 The characters engrav'd with points of steel
 Upon the solid rock, or plates of gold,
 The eye shall hardly read, when time has wore
 Th' inscription from the silent mould'ring stone
 Which crushes the proud column into dust :
 While the green wreaths by virtuous heroes claim'd
 In heaven's fresh verdant gardens ever bloom.

That gloomy entrance which directs the eye
 To the damp vault, where dust to dust returns !
 Here let me muse awhile, and take a view
 Of the dark mansion.—Whose remains are clos'd
 Within this house of death ?—the fullen door
 Grates on its hinges, seeming to receive
 With murmurs and reluctance those that pay
 A solemn visit to this dreary cell.

What mean these sudden tremors ? why this dread,
 These awful trembling thoughts, as I descend

Down to this vale of horror, where entomb'd
The pallid nations of the dead are clos'd ?
Be sooth'd my soul ! within these quiet rooms,
These silent habitations, built to shade
Man's crumbling dust, thou nothing hast to fear,
Where guilt forgets to vex or trouble more !

How solemn is the scene ! how dread the gloom !
Perpetual darkness ! night without a day !
Black doleful solitude ! where closely join'd,
Terror and sorrow, seeming to unite,
Have fixt their melancholy sad abode !
Hark ! how at ev'ry tread the hollow dome
Refounds beneath my foot ! the echo's voice
That long has slept, awaken'd now, is heard
To breathe and whisper round the vaulted walls !

A feeble gleam of light just finds a way
Thro' the dark grates, which from each coffin's nails
Reflected, sheds a glimm'ring ray, and shews
The tomb, where sleeps the mould'ring dust below.
Such spectacles of woe, half hid in shades,
Half by the baleful twilight gleam disclos'd,
On these dread gloomy mansions serve to give
A deeper horror—pensive as I pore
On each inscription, half by time effac'd.
No vulgar ashes seem to enter here ;
Birth, honour, titles, dignity and fame
Claim a pre-eminence to rest beneath

AMONG THE TOMBS. 51

This vaulted roof; where vain and ermin'd pride
By death unconquer'd, lives beyond the grave!
The great, the mighty, once in life renown'd,
Demand the tribute of a nobler tomb.

In mournful pompous order see 'em rang'd,
A tow'ring marble arch, rais'd high, to grace
'Their rotting relics; while th' ignoble dead
A grassy turf conceals, without a stone.

My pensive breast now eas'd of its surprise,
No longer dreads the shadowy phantoms rais'd
By fear and fancy's wild creative pow'r;
No pallid ghost, no spectre heard or seen,
Silence the regent of these dark abodes!

Yet still with dread and reverential awe
I traverse their black monuments, long fam'd
In life, now cover'd in a bed of clay;
Where honour is forgot, distinction dies;
The proud, the mean, the tyrant and the slave,
Levell'd by death, and lodg'd within a tomb,
One common undistinguish'd mass of clay.
The lords of ample manors, rich domains,
Who claim'd a worship from each bended knee,
Here drop their dignity, their plumes resign:
'Their vast revenues now and splendid stores
All hid, and clos'd within the winding shroud!
Where now their rooms of state, their gay saloons,
Their lustres, with a golden light that blaz'd!

The splendid dome, where pride late built a throne,
Chang'd for a niche within a darksome cell.

No gay retinue in these lonesome shades
Attend the statesman's or the patriot's urn,
Corruption here the brother of renown!
Heroes and kings to crawling worms ally'd;
His scepter, clay; the monarch's wreath, but dust.
A dusty statue taught by art to shed
Its marbled tears upon the crumbling tomb.
See, grandeur, thy reward! and birth, thy prize!
Your spring, alas, how diff'rent from your fall;
Fair as the sun altho' your mornings shine,
How soon your ev'nings shall be clos'd in shade!
The silver star that beams upon your breast,
'The coronet that now your temples binds,
For what exchang'd?—a tatter'd 'scutcheon hung,
A poor atchievment plac'd above your urn;
These the remains of dignity expir'd,
The empty emblems of your lost renown.

What, tho' your blood thro' royal channels flow'd,
A race of heroes shining in the train
Of your fam'd ancestry—When life expires,
And death has sign'd your summons to a tomb,
Say, who your kindred then? to whom allied?
To reptiles!—Brothers of the gnawing worm!

A truth, how solemn this, of pow'r to wean
The soul's keen appetite from transient joys,

The sickly fading glories all are lost,
And fleet away the moment that they smile.

Say, what are treasures to the dead remains
Of breathless mortals? what their pleasures now?
A bubble broke, their honour's but a dream,
Wild fancy's child, forgotten in the grave!
Man's unexperienc'd yet, and fond desire
May paint these blessings real, solid, sure;
Yet ah, when death has weigh'd 'em in a scale,
Fleeter than wind, and lighter than a plume,
These transitory shadows glide away;
Our longest comforts shorter than a span,
Glitt'ring like sparks the moment they expire.

One moment more, one serious pause, my soul,
Indulge, to weigh the gay and glitt'ring toys
That catch the eye and captivate the heart!
Feign thyself then amongst the fav'rite few
That share the smiles of fortune, with a power
In pleasure's lap to revel, or to shine
In robes of honour; tides of riches pour'd
Each day, to add to thy encreasing stores;
Yet, ah, how soon the passing-bell will toll,
The iron tongue of death an end proclaim,
A final exit to earth's short-liv'd joys!
The period hast'ning on, when triumphs, fame,
Grandeur, thy pageantry, thy birth, thy plumes,
Like the thin smোক when scatter'd by the wind,

Shall soon dissolve, and vanish into air ;
Your weight, a feather—and an hour your stay !

Ye breathless relics, once in life rever'd,
Shadows of past renown and fame expir'd :
More solid wisdom from your dust I gain,
Than Newton's volumes, or from Bodley's shrines.
What Greece thy porch, or thy learn'd sages Rome,
E'er taught, or uttered—in a winding-sheet
I here behold ; proud dignity in dust,
Pale grandeur whelm'd, and mould'ring in its urn.
Let others bend the low and humble knee
To fortune's favourite sons ; obsequious fawn
On grandeur, to bestow a gracious smile.
From these sad relics, from the sleeping dust
Of mortals, while in life, immortal deem'd,
To moderate my thirst of earthly fame ;
Thy gaudy tinsel, wealth ; honour, thy plume,
Shadows that cheat when courted ; while I aim
At bliss more solid, glories more sublime,
Blooming above, when time shall be no more !

What awful sound was that ? in this dark gloom
Each whisper, even the stillest sound, alarms
The list'ning ear—it is the bell that gives
A loud and striking warning to my soul,
And ratifies each serious thought these shrines
And solemn mansions of the dead inspir'd.
It has a voice important, and declares

One portion of my destin'd race expir'd !
The solemn knell of my departed hours.
It cries in reason's ear, the time redeem,
Catch now its fav'rite gales, while yet they breathe,
Ere lost for ever—tell thy trembling soul
How short life's fleeting journey, with what speed
Its ebbing sand sinks down, thy minutes all
Upon the wing, and hasting to be lost
In time's abyfs ; a borderer each day
On that eternal state, which ev'ry hour
Advances nearer, which shall soon consign
Each mortal to a scene of blifs or woe.

Sink deep these admonitions in my soul,
Grav'd with an adamant, and pen of steel
On my convicted heart ; nor age nor time
Have pow'r the strong impression to efface
Death's triumphs, fixt in my attentive mind.

Oft have I walk'd beneath th' impending gloom
Of the dark craggy rock ; as often trod
The spaces of the desert's dreary plain ;
The cavern's deep recess, and inmost shade
Not left unvisited—but ne'er till now
Beheld I nature, low'ring with a frown,
So horrid and tremendous ! never awe
So fearful and so striking chill'd my heart,
As felt within these black-brow'd arches, hung
With rueful objects, death's imperial spoils,

Sad seat of sorrow, woe's eternal home,
Where, ghastly low'ring, on her ebon throne,
Deep melancholy spreads her raven wings.
From this dark dread obscurity, awhile,
This scene of desolation and despair,
Let me emerge, to breathe a purer heav'n,
And visit the bright chearful realms of day.

Yet e'er I leave these mansions of the dead,
These ashes, once with active life inspir'd ;
Indulge me, if too curious, to enquire
(The sable cov'ring of each tomb survey'd)
What ghastly forms are lodg'd within their urns.
Here the sweet winning aspect, once that wore,
Blooming in life, a soft attractive smile,
Grins horribly, a ghastly naked skull.
That eye, which once outshone the ruby's ray,
The brilliant's lustre, and the sapphire's flame,
As lightning bright and keen, that dealt its wounds
And pierc'd each lover's fond unguarded heart ;
Where are its arrows now, those glances arm'd [fire.
With death!—how dead their light, how sunk their
Where now that moving eloquence which charm'd,
That soft persuasion, and those melting sounds,
Which once allur'd, and sooth'd each raptur'd ear?
Silent as night the orator now lies,
And peaceful as the monument that holds,
Within a darksome cell his dust confin'd.

The pamper'd epicure so lately cloath'd
In purple, say what now is his attire,
What his new ornaments?—His garment dust,
His vest a clammy clod of mould'ring clay;
The pillow where he sleeps, instead of down,
By death, how chang'd into a couch of stone!
The strong man here resigns his strength beneath
These tow'ring vaults; the nervous arm unstrung,
The blood no longer dancing in the veins.
Unbrac'd the brawny sinews, once the seat
Of vig'rous active life; the hardy bones,
Once bars of iron, crumbled into dust.
The busy here, each passion quite subdu'd
By death, their fav'rite schemes pursue no more;
Commerce forgets to spread her canvas wings,
Fame ceases to incite, and wealth to charm,
Trade's hurry spent—the coffin and the shroud
Bound all the vain pursuits of earthly care.
The sons of pleasure here must bid adieu
To all their dear delights, nor longer bath'd
In rich perfumes, no more with roses crown'd;
Frequent the banquet, quaff the nectar'd bowl;
Here the nice epicure prepares a treat
For fat'ning insects; to the crawling worm
Himself at last a rich and luscious meal.
Here beauty drops her lustre—Sigh to view
Her lillies languish, and her roses fade,

In this bleak soil where nought but horror grows.
 Death the great leveller a vial pours
 Of low contempt on her who lately charm'd,
 Robs her of ev'ry grace and youthful smile,
 Who lately held the captive world in chains.

Say, could the ardent lover take a view
 Of his enchanting fair one in her tomb;
 His startled eye now weeping o'er her urn,
 Would thus lament—his wonder thus unfold!
 ' Was this the object of my fond desire,
 ' Whose image always dwelt within my heart,
 ' Beauty confess'd, the fairest of the fair!
 ' Her form was symmetry itself, each grace
 ' And elegance still breath'd in ev'ry air;
 ' 'Twas music when she spoke, her heavenly voice
 ' A cherub's, when she sooth'd the list'ning ear.
 ' How often has my bosom felt a joy,
 ' Kindled with raptures when she look'd a smile?'
 And can those lovely cheeks, those melting eyes
 Once rivals to the morn's refulgent ray,
 So soon their light'ning lose, their flames resign?
 Perfection's ghastly relics, beauty's dust,
 A heap of black deformity, entomb'd.
 Where now those blushing looks, those beauteous
 Of coral lips, that neck which iv'ry sham'd, [twins
 The curls of jetty locks that loosely flow'd
 Around the polish'd shoulder? fearful change!

How

How sudden, how amazing ? Fancy's eye
 Had drawn a lasting permanent delight ;
 But, ah ! the glitt'ring star I view'd with joy,
 How soon into a fleeting meteor turn'd,
 That beams a light one moment, then expires.
 The luminary quench'd, which from its orb
 So lately pour'd a stream of golden rays,
 (Turn'd to a putrid mass of loathsome clay)
 Now rolls within its lucid orb no more !

Rest, poor Amelia, in this cheerless tomb !
 Its deepest dark recesses chose to hide
 Thy withering cheeks, which death's cold hand has
 struck.

Let night with her impenetrable gloom
 Conceal thee from the sight of prying eyes :
 Tell thy surviving sisters, now in tears,
 Lamenting o'er thy breathless once-lov'd form,
 The gloomy vault that holds thy dust confin'd,
 Will soon be open'd to conceal their own,
 As then the flatt'ring glass the idol shews,
 Gracefully fair, and rising to the eye
 A beauteous image drest with ev'ry charm.
 When vanity is stealing on the soul,
 And pride begins the bosom to inspire
 With dang'rous affectation ; bid them view
 How dark a veil of horror now is drawn
 Over those vermeil cheeks, those lucid eyes
 That

That glitter'd once with lustre like their own!
 The toilet's morning labours then no more;
 More earnest and solicitous the soul,
 The jewel lodg'd within it to adorn,
 Than waste a moment's thought to varnish o'er
 The casket which the gem within enfolds.
 'Twould then appear ambition's noblest aim
 To cultivate the heart with virtues, fair
 Embellish'd, which conspire to add a charm
 To beauty's self, and dress it more divine.

Should this depreciate then the fairest form?
 With softer grace it rather would inspire
 The softest feature, than impair its charms;
 The moral sons of virtue from the tomb
 Rising immortal; (like the Phœnix' urn
 Impregnate with new life) whence springs a race,
 The conquerors of death, by time nor age
 Their bloom effac'd; eternity their claim,
 Unfading wreaths of glory their reward.

To meditate how soon the destin'd hour
 May lay me in the dust, awakes a shame,
 Once to have paid devotion to a shrine
 Of mouldering flesh, the childish hope how vain
 To draw a lasting blessing from a shade?
 This thought instructs me ne'er to entertain
 Too high a thought of well-proportion'd clay;
 Tho' beauty in the curious mould may bloom

With

AMONG THE TOMBS. 61

With softness and the sweetest soul inspir'd.
This last best cordial gift of heav'n, that crowns
Man's happiness below to be receiv'd
With gratitude and love, but not rever'd
Nor worship'd with that incense flatt'ry pours ;
That adoration paid before the shrines
Of mortal idols, fancy paints divine.

My roving meditations now recall'd,
Which long had wander'd o'er this tender theme,
A lover's soft discourse forgot a while,
As sober reason now resumes the reins.
Conversing long with these dark scenes that hold
Death's trophies, and the triumphs of the grave,
A rising sigh my breast could not restrain,
Bursting its prison, as in tears I view
Creation's noblest beings turn'd to dust,
In life rever'd, in death a mass of clay !

Musing awhile within the solemn gloom
That holds the dead enclos'd, I ask my heart,
Shall man's great conqueror then an arrow aim
At my devoted bosom ? Am I doom'd
A feast for worms, a victim of the grave ?
Once must I draw a parting gasp, become
A breathless corpse, and be what I deplore ?
Say, is the hour now hast'ning on the wing
Destin'd to lay this body on the bier,
And lodge it in a bed of clay-cold earth :

When

When some kind friend perhaps may drop a tear,
And breathe his sorrows o'er my senseless urn !
Fixt is the strong decree—by heav'n's own voice
The dread commission sign'd, each mortal born
By nature's law is destin'd once to die ?

Say, should some ghastly figure burst the tomb,
Unbar the gates of death, and from its shroud
Starting, in dread deformity appear !
Should the pale haggard skeleton uplift
Its clattering hands and stiffen'd jaws unfold ;
Horror itself less horrible ; the ghost,
In hoarse tremendous murmurs, heaven's decree
Thus utter—' Mortal, thou art soon to die !'
This solemn warning, this important sound
Must sure impress an awe upon my soul,
A message sent in thunders from the sky,
Would fill the trembling heart with less amaze !
• Since then my destin'd portion is a grave,
The period fix'd, the latent hour unknown,
To the world's guilty vanities a foe ;
Let me aspire when lifted from the tomb
Thus to disarm heav'n's keen avenging frown :
May then my ebbing sands that swiftly glide
Down life's frail glass, instruct me to employ
The short uncertain intervals that lie
'Twixt life and death, my title to ensure
To bliss, to glory, to heav'n's golden crown.

AMONG THE TOMBS. 63

Man's ghastly foe, in smiles I then should view,
And welcome his approach without a tear.

Since then this body, so divinely fram'd,
Must sink a shatter'd ruin in its urn ;
That power, those faculties, by heaven inspir'd,
Be all exerted to the noblest aim,
The pious ends for which they were bestow'd :
Let charity stretch out her lib'ral hand,
And feeling friendship wipe away the tear
From the sad mourner's cheek, o'erwhelm'd with
Pale poverty, by my indulgent care [woe.
Be banish'd from the peasant's hungry cell ;
My heart relenting, while my ear attends
The orphan's sigh in depths of sorrow drown'd.

Bend then my knees, in adoration bow
To heaven's empyreal throne—with downcast eyes
On earth, in penitential sorrow mourn ;
Or lifted on devotion's flaming wing,
Unbar the gates of light above the sky !
For pardon supplicate, for mercy sue.
In every friendly intercourse, the law
Of kindness on my lips for ever dwell :
Loud as the trumpet's voice let me proclaim
To man his title to immortal crowns !
By one great victim slain, each guilt atton'd,
A bleeding saviour and a god appears'd.

Against

Against the tongue of slander, let my ear
Be ever clos'd, and riot's nauseous tale.
Thy precepts, wisdom ; which the voice divine
Dictates, my raptur'd soul's supremest joy.
Oh, bear me to the temple, where enthron'd
The lord of glory sits in awful state
And fearful majesty ; the *pow'r* array'd,
Pleas'd to attend the couches, where in tears
The aged languish, and the poor complain ;
And poverty's pale look a pity claims
From charity's benign and bounteous hand.
If virtues fair as these my life adorn,
Useless th' embalmer's labour, vain his care
My relics to preserve when mixt with clay,
And guard me from corruption in the grave.
'Tis innocence which sheds the rich perfume,
And pours the sweetest odours on our urn,
From whence our sleeping ashes shall arise,
Glowing with life immortal, pure, refin'd,
From their dark prison, rising to the skies
Triumphant, and to death no more a prey.

Each spot survey'd, mortality's last home,
Where sleep thy spoils, oh death, to dust consign'd,
Hence mounted high on contemplation's wing,
Fancy convey'd me, (such her roving *pow'r*)
Where, Calvary, thy fatal lowring brow
O'erlooks the garden, in whose rocky cave

AMONG THE TOMBS. 65

All nature's sovereign lord of earth and heav'n,
The architect divine was once entomb'd.
The godhead here a tenant of the grave ;
Creation's builder dwelling now with worms !
Tremendous vault, what pris'ner dost thou close ?
One who assumes the light for his attire ;
Tempests his chariot, and his wings the wind ;
On whose strong rapid plumes he rides sublime,
When borne triumphant thro' th' empyreal sky !
Myriads of flaming cherubs grace his throne.
Who can too oft these wond'rous truths display,
Or dwell too long on this transporting theme ?
He who above supreme in glory reigns,
Diffusing bliss to all his saints around,
Lay thus a pale and bleeding corse, enclos'd
Within the gloomy confines of a grave !

How great thy triumph, death ! how rich thy
In that important moment, when thy bow [spoils !
Unpeopling wasted empires, cou'd detain
So great a pris'ner breathless in the tomb !
Yet boast not tyrant long thy savage pow'r ;
Soon shall thy laurels fade ; the victim rise
Victorious and immortal from the grave !
Dying, to live with deathless glories crown'd,
Whose short and transient slumbers open threw
Thy brazen gates, unlock'd the bolted door

Which held so long thy captives bound in chains,

Mythic amazing change ! for mortals born
To put on immortality—the grave
A source of new existence, life renew'd
From kindling dust, destin'd no more to dye ;
The mighty victor robb'd of all his power,
And by the point of his own arrow slain.

Dread then no more the horrors of a tomb,
The dark and dreary passage of the grave ;
Death's dismal vaults enlighten'd now and cheer'd ;
Each bed of dust strew'd o'er with rich perfumes,
And odours breathing from *Messiah's* urn.
Death now but life's beginning—'Tis the door
Op'ning immortal prospects to our view !
'Tis sorrow's exit—a discharge from tears ;
That brightens and refines our mould'ring clay ;
The prelude to unfading endless joys !
Thy jav'lin, death, like the fam'd Pelian spear,
Infixing first the wound it after heals.

Why startl'd and amaz'd ye slaves of fear ?
Why pensive when the passing bell resounds
A summons to the grave ? the mournful eye
Why trembling to behold an open'd tomb ?
Tho' yet in bondage to that grisly king
Of terrors (man's envenom'd deadly foe,
Whose quiver empties nations, and disarms

The strong and mighty) breathe an ardent prayer
To him who sits above, in glory thron'd
With his eternal parent, cloath'd in rays
Of light ineffable—and if secure
Of his redeeming love, thy faith shall break
The tyrant's bonds, and free thee from his chains.

Hail! Halcyon days return'd! unclouded skies
And years with never-fading spring that bloom!
Peace, friendship, amity, and concord mild
Shall smile and flourish when *Messiah* reigns,
Secure beneath his wing, thou shalt deride
Death's awful terrors, press beneath thy feet
That ghastly tyrant—round the aspic's hole
Thou then shalt play—the cockatrice no more.
Thy dauntless hand shall dread; the viper's tooth
Shall fasten on thy arm—nor leave a wound.

Life springing from the dust!—A truth reveal'd
And ratified by heaven's authentic seal,
How grateful, and what music to the ear!
My anxious thoughts relieving, while my soul
Starts this alarming doubt—' Shall death confine
' (How abject their condition) in this gloom
' These corpse' for ever clos'd? Is this decreed
' Their last and final state? A grave their home!
' Shall the grim tyrant frown, his savage arm
' Still boast his triumphs, nor unbar the tomb

‘ That holds his slaves imprison’d in their urns ?
A voice divine is heard, (the cheering sound
How rapt’rous, and dilates the heart with joy)
That intimates to man the speeding hour
Is on the wing, that bears the fixt decree [grave,
Sign’d by heaven’s hand, which rescues from the
The dark abodes beneath, their beds of clay
Burst ope the marble doors that long have held
Their pris’ners bound in adamantine chains !
When from his throne Messiah shall descend,
Th’ archangel’s trump resounding, as he flies
From world to world, his voice the dead shall hear.
Destruction’s self awaken’d at his call,
Each tomb resign its dust, and back returns
Its captives, to behold once more the skies ;
Who bounding with fresh vigour from their urns
Shall quit their desolate and dark abode ;
Spring up immortal, slaves of death no more,
To meet their Lord triumphant in the air !

Say, in what extacies of cordial joy,
What soft endearments, raptures how sincere,
Shall the glad smiling soul again be join’d
To the lov’d relics, its forgotten clay ?
Their transports still more ardent, as they view
Their Saviour’s arms extended to receive
And welcome their approach, from death restor’d
To

To endless life, to weep and die no more.

What tho', in glory terribly array'd,
His eyes effulgent into darkness turns
The sun's meridian's lustre, as he drives
His golden chariot flaming thro' the air !
Cherubs his bright attendants, in his flight
To earth from heaven, to burst the marble gates
Of death asunder and unseal the grave !
Yet no cold dread the solemn pomp shall pour
Upon the heirs of light to life restor'd ;
Hope's prisoners long; their hopes at last exchang'd
For endless bliss, for crowns that never fade !

Tho' nature's God descending from the sky
To wake a new creation from the dust,
Spreads a wild terror and surprise around
Astonish'd nations, as he rides sublime
Upon the whirlwind's wings ; yet you whose names
Are written in the bright records above,
Behold his blazing car without amaze,
As on he rides triumphant, to convey
The heirs of glory to the realms of bliss ;
In whose delightful gardens, verdant spring,
Cloath'd with unfading flowers, for ever blooms.

The thunders now are hush'd, the light'nings
cease

Their ravage—while th' angelic armies stand
Fix'd in a deep suspense, the num'rous race

Of Adam, waiting their expected doom.
 Wrap'd in a pleasing hope of promis'd joy,
 And trembling for the fate they soon must share !
 When that almighty pow'r, whose smile is life,
 Whose kind acceptance is an heavenly crown,
 From off his throne, in beams of light array'd,
 Utters his voice, by countless myriads heard.
 What extacies of joy, what transports glow
 Within each faithful bosom, while in smiles
 Their awful god, their Saviour now and friend,
 Their sentence ratifies.—‘ To you I give
 ‘ The golden crown of life, your virtue's due,
 ‘ Promis'd to those believing in my name.
 ‘ In you nor spot nor blemish I behold,
 ‘ Cleans'd by my blood and with my merits cloath'd.
 ‘ Faithful on earth to death, these golden doors
 ‘ Of heaven are open'd wide to entertain
 ‘ Its pious guests, the children now of light
 ‘ That ever shine within these blest abodes ;
 ‘ Yours that celestial never-fading wreath
 ‘ That glory yours that never shall expire.’

With sickness the sad cheek no longer pal'd,
 To languish on a couch of death no more :
 How mean our short-liv'd blessings, when com-
 To the unfading bliss, this verdant crown [par'd
 The heirs of glory share beyond the grave !
 Death, now that mighty conqueror, shall own

Himself

Himself o'ercome, and feel a mortal wound.
 His fatal jav'lin which had drank the gore
 Of scepter'd kings ; his point that found a way
 To reach the hearts of all since *Adam* born,
 Lies broke and shatter'd—that enormous scythe
 That once unpeopl'd empires, swept away
 Past ages, long in dark oblivion lost,
 Has now its edge quite blunted and destroyed.
 That Guilt, insatiate archer, which once fill'd
 Thy pois'nous quiver, strung thy fatal arm
 With such resistless vigour, pointed all
 Thy shafts that bore destruction on their wings,
 Now wants a power to hurt, and to annoy,
 Or in the aking heart to fix a sting.
 All nature's frailty, ev'ry vicious stain
 Thrown off and buried with us in the grave,
 Which opens wide the gate that points the way
 To heav'n, to flow'ry scenes that ever bloom !

Awful, important hour ! Man's final state
 Beyond the tomb, determin'd, and unchang'd !
 What various passions mingled in the soul,
 By turns transport us, and by turns alarm :
 These animate our glowing hopes, while those
 With equal dread our trembling heart amaze !

Since then the fix'd decree has pass'd the seal
 Of heav'n, that man is destin'd once to tread

The gloomy path of death, to be convey'd
To bliss or woe, to regions yet unknown ;—
Start at a truth which pleases or confounds.—
When life is now no more, when once we fall,
Eternity ! into thy boundless stream,
The adamant rock is not so strong
As that unchanging sentence which decides
Our fate for ever ; bears us to the sky,
Or sinks us in the deepest gulph of woe.
Time then shall stand unmov'd, its sluggish wheels
Forget their motion, and roll on no more ;
Once fixt, for ever fixt each mortal's doom !
If stretch'd on racks, or shining on a throne,
The hand of heaven, annex'd to the decree,
Has seal'd the order, never to be chang'd.
See how each pris'ner from the grave releas'd
Stands doubtful ere his fate is yet ordain'd,
If justice shall condemn, or mercy save ;
Their lot unfading joy, or ceaseless pain.

Eternity ! thou pleasing dreadful name !
How reason staggers, and how thought recoils,
Striving to fathom with its scanty line
The breadth, the depth, of thy abyss unknown !
Say can the sage's deepest search explore
Thy dark beginning, or find out thy end ;
Millions to millions added, yet thy years
By all the power of numbers still untold !

What

What countless periods are already fled,
 Yet thy mysterious journey, scarce begun !
 What ages yet to come shall pass away,
 And thy unbounded flight, not yet expire !
 Imagination check'd, and fancy tir'd,
 Wisdom, the child of folly, while it tries
 Thy dark mysterious essence to unfold !
 The sands that glitter on the ocean's shore,
 The drops descending from the dewy air
 To fertilize the glebe, and wake the spring ;
 The atoms in the summer suns that play,
 May all be number'd—yet the months and years,
 And ages rolling forward, to compleat
 The length of thy duration, quite unknown.

Assembled worlds now summon'd to receive
 And hear the sentence that decides their doom ;
 How varied their appearance—dread and joy
 Diversify their looks, as guilt has pal'd,
 Or virtue on each cheek a bloom inspir'd !

Transported now by heaven's reviving smiles,
 One scene of pleasure, one eternal stream
 Of happiness each pious heart o'erflows !
 Their voices tun'd, their harps for ever strung,
 Insur'd their bliss, without a dread of change.

The guilty !—how I shudder to survey
 The dark abyss in which they soon must fall !
 How fearful, how amazing ? Thought recoils

When

Whene'er it dwells upon the doleful scene,
That opens to the eye the realms of woe !
Where hell's blue horrors, and reluctant flames
Fed by heaven's angry breath, for ever glow ;
The boiling furies, never to be calm'd,
Still rolling o'er their head, unquench'd by time,
Which burn to torture only, not destroy !

The wicked closely bound with brazen chains
In these black dismal mansions, wait the call,
When the last trumpet sounding, shall awake
Their sleeping dust, and summon them to hear
Their destin'd sentence from heaven's awful throne !
When stretch'd upon the couch of death they lay,
What low'ring clouds of dismal horror hang
Upon their closing eyelids, which foretold
Their fate, prophetic of their future woes.

When the last sickness shook their feeble frame,
Advancing near th' inevitable change ;
The fatal arrow bounding from the string ;
Death, that sure archer, levels at their breast.
Just ere they feel its point transfixt, which drains
The dregs of faint expiring life away ;
A dread how horrible, what dire amaze
Preys on the shudd'ring heart, as now they stand
On the steep precipice, its gulph below
Wide op'ning to receive them as they fall !
To death devote, and yet afraid to die.

What

What fearful retrospections, pale reviews,
And startling prospects now conspire and join
Their martial'd terrors, to augment their pain,
Sting the distress'd, and cleave the bursting heart !
If backward they retort a thought, what gloom,
What melancholy scenes distract the soul ?
Sins unrepented, guilt not yet aton'd,
Mercy despis'd, the day of grace expir'd ;
All hope extinct, or buried in despair !
Or if they glance a forward look, how dire
The prospect—Seated on his awful throne
The godhead, his red hand with vengeance arm'd,
To calm his fury, and his wrath allay,
How impotent and weak all mortal pow'r
To stop the dart which flies to give the wound !

Attending friends with tears they now behold,
Their pangs encreasing, by reflection's sting
That festers in their bosom, to survey
The partners of their guilt they once betray'd,
How soon to be the part'ners of their woe !

Or if the pious few in tears attend
Their clammy couch, to breathe a last adieu,
Their sorrows are encreas'd the more, to know
How far disjoin'd—how different is their doom ;
The burning lake, the red outrageous flames,
Which hell's sad pris'ners in its gulph enclose
From heaven's review, for ever shut their eyes,

Its

Its joys all lost, its glories seen no more.

Death's near approach, as now they shiv'ring lie,
Extorts at last perhaps a parting prayer !

All other succours vain, they now apply
For mercy, heaven, to thy indulgent throne.

With trembling lips, with accents scarce perceiv'd,
That sov'reign now address, who boasts a power
To rescue from the tomb, to kill or save.

But why this serious thought so long restrain'd?
These warm addresses, why no sooner breath'd
(From piety not springing, but despair)
Heaven's threaten'd wrath to stop or to appease.
Those kind entreaties heard with what disdain,
Inviting them to bliss, to taste the joys
In *Eden's* flowery spring that ever bloom ;
Ere death had whet his jav'lin, all prepar'd.
To wrap its victims in a robe of clay !

Compassion infinite, vouchsafe a smile !
One gleam of pity ere they yet expire ;
Tho' justice may arraign, yet boundless love,
Mercy relenting, still may wish to save !

Thus waste away the mouldering poor remains
Of ebbing life, 'till dust to dust returns.
Their cheeks now moisten'd with a clammy dew ;
The pillow chang'd to marble, where they groan ;
Deep piercing tortures and convulsive throes,
Rack ev'ry limb, and swell each beating vein ;

'Till

'Till man's great conqu'ror a last arrow throws,
That lets in death at the wide gaping wound.

Their lot how blest ! how welcome the decree
Were dying once for ever to expire,
And death the end of life ; the grave that clos'd
Their ashes, the kind tomb of all their woes !
But, ah, the sad reverse ! the vital flame
Exinct, 'tis then their sorrows but begin ;
Death the least bitter drop the guilty taste
From phials of avenging anger pour'd !
Soon as the last reluctant pang has clos'd
The gates of life, no more to view the day !
How trembling, how amaz'd, as now they stand
Next heaven's tremendous bar, too weak to bear
The terrors of their angry judge's frown !
Oh, say, can fancy paint, or thought conceive
The black distress, the melancholy gloom
Clouding their hearts, and hanging on the soul,
When hurried to their great creator's throne,
Where pity smiles, where mercy pleads no more ;
Rejected by an angry god, whose voice
Consigns 'em to a prison, black, forlorn,
The dark abode of sorrow and despair !

Nor this the final sum of all their woes.
Heaven has its cup of wrath to empty still
On their devoted head—Its slighted laws,
Reproofs neglected, mercy's offers scorn'd,

Omni-

Omnipotence unheard, its power defy'd ;
These their accusers now, who all shall join
To ratify the verdict justice claims ;
While pity's self is deaf to all their groans.

What, tho' they once shall burst their marble
If immortality's a curse, a life [tomb !
Immortal only lengthens out their woes,
Their beings endless, endless too their pains !
How would they rather wish the hand that clos'd
Their breathless dust, had still debarr'd the light
From visiting their silent calm abode,
Where darkness was more welcome than the day.

But, ah, the grave refuses to conceal
Its trembling pris'ners, or to throw a veil
To cover from heaven's eye its guilty slaves.
They too must all awake—and pal'd with fear,
Be summon'd to desert their beds of clay,
And face that judge, before whose awful eye
Heaven's pillars tremble ; at whose dread command
The solid world's foundations melt away.

Ah, where those bowels now, those chearing
beams
Of heavenly love, that waited long to thaw
The frozen heart, now into fury turn'd,
And fiery indignation to consume
Those whom its goodness strove in vain to save ;
As pleas'd to punish now as once to spare.

As pangs of deep distress distract the soul,
 Lost hope succeeded now by black despair ;
 Say, to what power for refuge can they turn,
 At whose auspicious shrines for mercy sue
 On bended knees, in that important hour,
 Decreed for ever to decide their doom
 Eternity itself shall never change ?

The sigh now bursts, the tear is drop'd in vain,
 Too weak their cries to wrest or to disarm
 Almighty justice, from whose awful eye
 Mercy now exil'd, spreads her wings no more
 To shield the guilty from heaven's angry frown :
 Compassion now their foe, with vengeance arm'd ;
 Their guilt indelible ; too deep their stains
 For pity's self relenting, to excuse.

The books are now unclos'd, the secret schemes
 Of ev'ry heart display'd ; what long had lain
 Wapt up in shades, now open'd to the day !
 How weak, hypocrisy thy arts refin'd
 To throw a veil of virtue o'er thy crimes !
 To garnish out thy guilt, and paint the face
 Quite blotted o'er with infamy, more fair !
 Go sons of vanity, your skill employ,
 And boast those stratagems which have deceiv'd
 Deluded mortals, full as weak as vain.
 That searcher of the heart, whose piercing eye
 Looks thro' the wide creation's ample round,

Has

Has waited near your couch, each thought survey'd,

Long hid, and in the guilty breast conceal'd.

See the black scroll hung up to ev'ry view,
Where all the schemes of darkness are enroll'd
By folly's short-ey'd wisdom, deem'd unknown;
The guilt of ages register'd, which lay
Forgotten long, and bury'd in the grave!

Whose courage then shall arm him to abide
The fiery trial? fearless who behold
The ghastly terrors bursting from that throne,
Where justice with one hand uplifts her scale
With one unsheaths her sword! its vengeful steel
Soon to be drench'd in each rebellious heart.
Guilt now in silence seals each speechless tongue,
While by the angel-host contempt is pour'd
On wretched numbers, frozen in despair;
Darkness a bed of rest, to these more sweet
Than light, than life emerging from the grave!
Their ardent wish, to breathe and live no more!
Rather beneath the rock's impending gloom,
Or the earth's shatter'd ruins crush'd to lie;
'Till suns, and stars, and heavens no longer shine;
All roll'd together in th' outrageous flames,
Wide spread, that sinks creation into dust.

If then contempt alone, their dread alarms,
What stings must pierce their bosom, when they view

The

The fiery sword, by indignation drawn,
Now waving o'er their heads, and wrath divine
Directing at their naked breast ; without a shield
Or helm, to ward against the destin'd blow !

With deep amazement tremble then, my soul,
To hear the wretch's plaints now rend the sky.
Their agonies how torturing, doom'd to mourn
For ever in the gloom of black despair !
See heaven's artillery now cleaves the air,
Its well aim'd bolts with a commission arm'd,
To drive the exiles far from mercy's throne ;
Plung'd in the sulph'rous gulph ; the deluge fed
By heaven's own breath with unabating flames ;
That threaten to consume but ne'er destroy ;
The wretch still dying yet forbid to die.

Supreme of woes ! too shocking for the soul
To dwell upon such thoughts without amaze !
If to foresee this dreadful scene be woe,
Plac'd at a distance, with some glimm'ring rays
Of hope surviving still, that what we fear
May not be felt, how bitter then to groan
Beneath the surges of those ruddy fires,
In hell's profound abyfs, that ever roll ?

If then one beam of soft compassion warms
Our tender breast ; if pity to ensure
The wretched race of man from endless pains ;
Here all our eloquence exert its power

To crush the rebel's arm, the proud to warn,
To calm the wrath divine, for peace to sue,
Ere yet the hour of mercy is expir'd;
By day, by night, imploring them to fly
From heaven's avenging frown—the golden door
Of pity, op'ning wide this present hour,
The next perhaps for ever to be clos'd.
Transporting wonders these, which ought to dwell
Grav'd with a di'mond's point upon the soul;
Each morn my theme, my subject ev'ry eve;
Alone, still pleasing, or when friendship joys
With innocence to spend the festive hour;
My monitors and guides when lying down,
My wisest best instructors when I rise.
If by these solemn serious thoughts inspir'd,
What views will open, what affections flame,
And lift me high on contemplation's wing,
To throw an eye of scorn on worldly joys,
Which please this moment, and the next expire!
Be it my sov'reign aim, my first desire,
Ambition's warmest effort to secure
A title, heaven, to thy reviving smile;
To quit the earth's thin bubbles for a crown
That never fades, for wreaths that never die.

Events, portentous these, that fill the soul
With dread amaze, and weigh'd in reason's scale,
Sink all the world's vain pomps that now allure

And

And tempt us into nothing and a shade :
The period hastens on to seal the fates
Of all that live ; of all who e'er have dy'd ;
Unnumber'd multitudes from ev'ry clime
Of the wide universe, pour'd round the throne,
Heaven's dread tribunal, to attend their doom.
These eyes the pregnant graves shall once behold
Op'ning their marble jaws ; the teeming seas
Resign their spoils, long hid within their waves !
Spectators once of this earth's shatter'd frame,
Of nature's ruin, and a world in flames.
The vast expanse of yonder melting skies,
Wrapt in red volumes of outrag'ous fire,
Messiah's golden ensigns waving high,
(Millions of cherubs blazing in his train)
Himself with light ineffable array'd,
Now bending from the skies, to summon all
Hell's pris'ners, and the tenants of the grave,
To his dread bar ; eternity in view ;
While time now rolls its broken wheel no more.

Shall these memento's then not teach my soul,
Not guide my heart with vigilance and care
Against the grand events, to live prepar'd ?
Girded my loins ; with oil my lamp supply'd ;
That when the trumpet summons me to leave
These scenes of sorrow, I may hear the call
With gladness, and in smiles of joy expire.

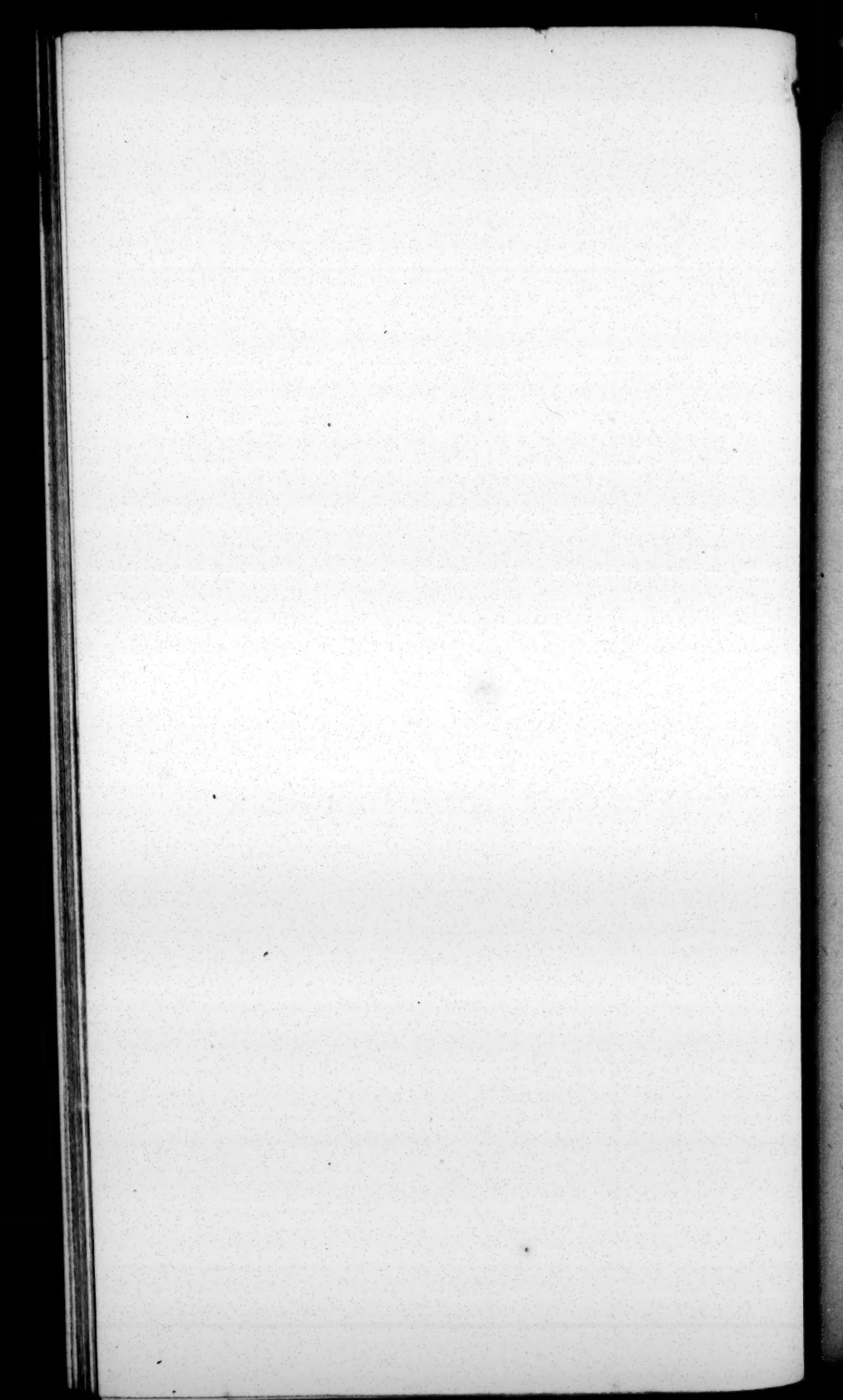
What else can arm my bosom to maintain
Its wonted vigour ; what, to bear the view
Of that amazing scene, when stars shall fall
From heav'n, their shatter'd orbs in pieces torn ;
When now the reeling earth tofs'd to and fro,
On her weak base no longer stands secure ;
The hearts of millions this important hour,
Shiv'ring with doubt, or sinking in despair.

REFLEC.

REFLECTIONS

ON A

FLOWER-GARDEN.



The Dutchess of RICHMOND.

May it please your GRACE,

A Garden was the first pleasing and beautiful habitation of our first parents; selected by heaven, as the most agreeable scene, to amuse their thoughts, and to protect their innocence; and I have reason to wish, that the verdant lawns, the arching shades, the cooling groves of GOODWOOD*, may long afford your GRACE the same transporting pleasures.

When, MADAM, you have experienced all the glittering and pompous vanities of this world; the emptiness of titles, the insufficiency of birth and grandeur to add any thing to our real happiness, (meteors which shine and invite, only to cheat and delude us) your GRACE will be convinced at last, that the most refined and rational satisfactions of life are to be enjoyed in these

* The Duke of Richmond's seat in Suffex.

DEDICATION.

rural retirements, which moralize and instruct, while they delight us ; gratifying our senses at the same time that they are guardians of our virtue. A solemn evening's walk in this enchanting solitude, formed to awaken serious thoughts and calm reflections on all the fleeting transient glories below, will inspire you with more soft, more tender, and refined sensations, than you can hope to derive from the flattering gaieties of a court, or the treacherous smiles of fortune. It is in this cool, this peaceful, and instructive retirement, that the mind usually first begins to attend to the voice of wisdom, drops its pride and ambition, meditates upon its immortal state, and borrows its intellectual light, even from these shades.

These, M A D A M, are truths unpleasing perhaps in the prime of youth and beauty, which, like the flowers I present your GRACE with, must soon decay and languish ; but they are the truths which reason subscribes to, and experience ratifies ; resembling those salutary though bitter medicines which disgust us first and afterwards relieve us.

Your

DEDICATION.

Your GRACE has already gained a conquest over the heart of a most worthy and distinguished nobleman, esteemed and beloved at home, admired and honoured by the most refined and polished courts in EUROPE : extend your power yet farther, strive to obtain victory over yourself ; a more glorious and laudable triumph, which will entitle you to a more illustrious crown than the proudest victors upon earth ever layed a claim to.

A particular reason for my presuming to affix your GRACE's name to this poem, and to desire your acceptance of it, was the opportunity it gave me of making a grateful and publick acknowledgment of those signal favours I have received from that noble and generous family to which you are now happily allied ; and could I hope for the continuance of the least share of their regard and friendship, I should esteem the last scenes of a life, almost worn out with age and infirmities, not altogether unhappy.

Be pleased, MADAM, to accept of my most affectionate and ardent wishes, that your present felicity may be as lasting as it
is

DEDICATION.

is now sincere and real; which time may
prolong, though it should want a power to
improve.

I am,

May it please your GRACE,

Your GRACE's most dutiful,

And obedient humble servant,

T. NEWCOMB.

REFLECTIONS

ON A

FLOWER-GARDEN.

HOW cool the air ! how sweet the breathing-
gale,

Creation's face how fresh ! while morning grey
Sheds her dim light, and o'er the moisten'd earth
Scatters the liquid pearl, ere yet the sun
Has pour'd his orient beam and hail'd the day.
Scarce yet awake, the poring eye of care
Unseals its lid, while riot's giddy head
Is just reclin'd upon its couch of down.
Silence o'er nature still extends her reign,
And each fair object op'ning with the morn,
Inspires the heart with bliss unknown before,
And tranquil joy with serious thought unites.

Now tow'ring on the wing, sublime in air,
'The lark, melodious songster, mounted high,
Breathes her soft mattins, and salutes the morn
That lifts her from her bed.—Her early notes
Call the laborious rustic to his toil,
And all the feather'd choir to join her song.

Ah,

Ah, catch the genial fragrance! See what charms
This hour of prime affords; with hasty steps
Impress the dewy lawns, and gladly taste
These various blessings from the bounteous hand
Of heav'n, pour'd out each ravish'd sense to please.
Ye sons of indolence and sloth arise,
Start from your drowsy pillows, and partake
More solid bliss, reach'd out each blissful morn
By heaven's indulgent smile, than what you share
From guilty pleasures, killing while they smile.

Gently the greyness of the dawn decays,
And ruddy streaks of gold begin to tinge
The fleeces of the clouds; till now the east
Varies her aspect, lost her quiv'ring light
In a bright, ardent, boundless flood of day.
Say, is it fancy's power inspires the dream,
Suggests the thought; or, do the blushing skies
Redden with conscious shame, such crowds to view
Pressing their pillows, while the morn awakes,
Inviting ev'ry eye to hail its beams?
Shall man be lost to ev'ry active thought;
Shall he waste all his hours in shameful ease;
While, mounted on his golden car, the sun
Travels from world to world, in haste to bear
His Maker's dread commands; and all the choir
Of feather'd minstrels join their grateful songs
To celebrate their great creator's praise.

Oh!

Oh ! heighten the sweet harmony, proud man,
 Of these melodious tribes, and add the strains
 Of warm devotion to their tuneful lays ;
 Improve the gifts of nature, and refine
 Its balmy odours with a breath of praise.
 Look up to heav'n ! behold yon azure vault,
 Prodigious theatre ! dread scene of power divine,
 Whence the red light'nings dart their piercing flames,
 Where thunders burst impetuous in their rage,
 Uttering a dreadful voice ; loud tempests spend
 Their madding fury through the ample space
 Stretch'd out above ; where worlds unnumber'd roll
 Each above each, in beauteous order rang'd !
 How great the skill ! how infinite the power
 Of that creative hand, which spread so wide
 The ample dome where stars and planets blaze !
 Immeasurably wide to human eye ;
 To his, who views creation at one glance,
 Pervades the universe, a point, a grain,
 That dwindles into nothing when survey'd.
 Tho' high in power, yet, ah ! to wretched man,
 Distain'd with guilt, his mercy's more sublime.
 Gazing yon golden heavens, what object first
 Attracts our wonder ? See the radiant sun,
 High in his bright pavillion thron'd, begins
 His rapid progress from the eastern sky ;
 Flaming from world to world, 'till now his beams
 Are

Are quench'd and lost beneath the western main.
The clouds, those floating curtains that obscure
His light a while, drove backward by his rays,
As he approaches near their skirts, retire :
Glorious, and with superior brightness crown'd,
See with what awful majesty he treads
Heaven's chrystal floor, and with a bridegroom's
Gayly refulgent pours from out his urn [pride
A golden vivid flood of light and day.

Mark all the beauteous scenes, altho' refin'd
By art's soft pencil ; say, can these compare,
These touch the fancy, or the raptur'd eye,
Like the bright op'ning of a sunny morn ?
All the rich pomp which theatres display,
Their shining ornaments, the lustres hung
In the proud courts and palaces of kings,
Lose their diminish'd light, and die away,
Whene'er the sun unfolds his radiant beams.

What blessings does this bounteous planet pour
On the glad heart of man, when rolling round
His azure road he scatters as he flies,
To warm his raptur'd bosom, light and joy.

What would the world's benighted realms ap-
What cells of gloomy darkness, if bereav'd [pear,
Of the sun's chearing rays, its fairest scenes
Lost in obscurity, in shades conceal'd ?
In vain, alas ! in midnight's fable gloom

We turn our darken'd eyes, in hopes to gaze
The beauteous face of nature ; all around
A dreary waste, a chaos void and wild,
And formless, till the hour of morn returns,
Unbars the gates of light, and opens wide
A prospect to the eye, which now unfolds
Ten thousand beauteous scenes which lay conceal'd
Before in darkness : now the radiant heavens
Glitter with azure pav'd, with roses strew'd.
With lively verdure each green plain array'd,
Each flower puts on a glow of richest hue ;
The wide creation now is seen adorn'd
In all her rich attire and beauties bloom,
View'd by each wond'ring eye with raptur'd joy.

The earth we tread, without th' enliv'ning beams
Shot from the cheering sun's refreshing rays,
How gloomy, how forlorn ? a lifeless mass,
A clod of barren, dull, unactive clay !
What tree could then its verdant leaves unfold
To gratify the eye ? what plants disclose
The buds just op'ning all their glossy flowers ?
No more should we behold the verdant meads
All mantled o'er with green ; no more survey
The smiling vales all crown'd with golden stores
Of loaded harvests.—Fruitful orb, thy beams
Have pow'r to penetrate the glebe, and clothe
Each vegetable tribe: the spring is thine,

Thine

Thine the rich autumn ; 'tis thy kindly ray
That swells the gen'rous vine, whose genial heat
Ferments its juices, bids the wine-press flow,
And bends its branches with their yellow load :
Nor to earth's upper regions is confin'd
Thy salutary pow'r ; dark caverns, spread
In nature's deep recesses, hail thy beams,
Which fructify the shining beds of ore,
Unfold the saphire's lustre, and bestow
Its brightness on the brilliant, pouring light
And lustre on the rip'ning seeds of gold.
All nature feels, and joys to feel thy power ;
Chear'd by thy beams creation's ample sphere.

Not fruitless only, but unchearing, mourn
The gloomy regions, when the sun withdraws
His vig'rous influence ; how gay the morn,
When that auspicious sov'reign of the day,
Mounted upon his radiant throne, displays
His beams around, diffusing as he rolls
Richness and beauty to the worlds below.
Creation now, enliven'd by his rays,
Or with his gifts enrich'd, puts on a smile ;
While millions of gay glitt'ring insects wake
Into new life, and bask within his beams.
Now from their slumbers start the tuneful choir ;
Pour out their souls in harmony, and breathe
Their morning mattins to salute the day,

And hail the welcome blessing, which inspires
 The early song, when from their turf they rise :
 With rural music every valley rings,
 Each mountain ecchoing back the artless strains ;
 All vocal nature joins the gen'ral joy.

No breath untaught to celebrate and praise
 Thy chearing influence, sov'reign of the sky !

But see ! the scene how chang'd—his radiant orb
 Eclips'd but for a moment, nature pines,
 Puts on a robe of sadness, to bemoan
 His fire in darkness lost, extinct his flame ;
 While the sad pensive heavens a dress assume
 Of sable mourning to behold the sky
 Without a beam—night rushing on the day.
 Th' aspiring lark forgets his morning song,
 And, shooting downward from the darken'd sky,
 Pines on his dewy nest ; the voice of joy
 Is heard no more, while roaming for their prey
 Each savage scours the wood ; the heart of man
 Foreboding fear and chilling horrors seize.

Down from the steep of heaven, the earth to gaze,
 The raptur'd muse descends. What meets the eye,
 What first salutes us, joyous as we view
 Creation's various beauties ? See each spray
 Is hung with orient pearls of liquid dew ;
 How brilliant, with what lustre do they shine ?
 Not the rich diadem that binds the brow

Of eastern monarchs pours a fairer light,
Or glows with equal beauty ; like the bloom
That dyes the virgin's cheek, how soon decay'd!
These short-liv'd drops, the children of an hour,
A momentary radiance scarce enjoy ;
Just shine and vanish—while the sun, whose beams
Light up their silver beauties, soon exhales
The pearly drops, and melts them into air.
These, like earth's fleeting splendors, for a while
Glitter, look gay—then disappear and die.

How kindly these soft genial dews refresh
The earth's cold lap, and beautify each scene,
Changing her russet turf to lively green.
'The fervent heat which yesterday's hot sun
Shot from his orb had wither'd all her bloom ;
Blasted each verdant beauty, and exhal'd
'The fragrance and the sweets from nature's brow!
How bountiful and kind that power who sends
These cooling distillations of the night,
To quench the fervors of the burning day,
To raise the head of each parch'd drooping flow'r,
And cloath each herb again with sprightly green!
Sprinkled with these descending drops they smile,
'Their verdure deepen'd, and new flush'd their
bloom ;

Languid their fragrance, and quite faint before,
Now with more copious sweets the sense regale.

Profusion,

Profusion!- startling thought!--what rows of pearl
Now hang on ev'ry hedge, on ev'ry bough,
Beauteous and glittering!--not one shining spray,
Or blade of dewy grass, but wears a string
Of these bright watry pendants, to adorn
The face of nature; florid now and gay.

How various are the draughts, the schemes how
Plann'd out by heaven's indulgent care to fill [wise
Earth's loaded lap with plenty from the cloud!
Now burst the heavy, fierce, impetuous show'rs,
Driving their angry trains a-cro'ss the sky;
The rushing cataracts now roar; now break
And spend their furious rage on ev'ry shore;
Delug'd is ev'ry plain, the rivers foam,
Swell'd by the madding tempest into seas.
The scene now chang'd, the gentle dews descend,
Form'd in the close of the soft ev'ning air;
Gently they steal along, serene and mild,
And by insensible degrees deceive
The list'ning ear, and cheat the nicest eye.

Ere yet her pleasing labour she resumes,
The muse, delighted, chuses to ascend
Yon terras, thence to take a wide survey
Of the rich vales and flow'ry scenes below.
What prospects now attract the raptur'd eye!
How vast, how various, with what riches crown'd!
Nature's whole wealth pour'd out on ev'ry plain!

Amazing magazine ! whose wealth supplies
Subsistence to each living kind who tread
The verdant earth, or cut the liquid air ;
Supported by that bounteous hand which pours
A rich abundance round, the life to cheer
Of ev'ry creature which his goodness fram'd.

See there the yellow golden fields of corn
Cov'ring the fertile furrows, waving now,
And now their heads erect to catch the beams
Of the kind genial sun, to give the grain
More firmness, and the ears a glossy hue,
His granaries with plenty to supply,
And swell the toilsome peasant's heart with joy.

There stretch the verdant meadows smooth and
Richly embroider'd o'er with gayest flowers, [plain,
And green spontaneous herbage, which secures
Provision ample, hoarded up in store,
To feed the freezing herds, now chill'd with cold,
When all the beauteous verdure of the field
Is lost and buried in deep hills of snow.

I turn my eye, and there a winding stream
Glides gently thro' a margin check'd with flowers ;
The image of the bending sky, beneath
Impress'd upon the surface of its waves ;
Supplying moisture to each root that feeds
The green and branching willow's pleasing shade.
There sport the sinny race, all silver'd o'er

With

With gaudy scales, which ample sport supply
To the still patient angler, and afford
The richest treat which luxury demands,
Or taste, the most refin'd or nice, enjoys.

The pastures next with verdant mounds enclos'd,
Vary the prospect—These prepare a feast
Of healthful verdure springing to supply
Our flocks and herds with vigour to sustain
Their toils with stronger power, their nerves to
string.

'Tis here the sprightly horse more strength acquires
To expedite his daily toils, more speed
To bear his lord's commands where-e'er he flies :
While from the grassy plain our lowing herds
Bring home their udders with that liquid swell'd,
Healthful and sweet, that ev'ry palate charms.

There a tall grove of trees salutes the eye,
High tow'ring in the air, whose trunks appear
Like the proud colonnades that bear the weight
Of some imperial palace.—Every bough
Projects a friendly shade, which shelter yields
To birds and beasts whenever winter chills,
Or when the sun with raging fervor burns.

From hence the strong-rib'd oak is hew'd, that
lends
Those beams supporting the proud royal dome ;
Hence too the lordly masts convey'd, which bear

Our floating fleets thro' seas to worlds unknown;
Nor blush the crackling branches to provide
A fuel for our hearths when winter calls,
And woo's us to enjoy their friendly flames.

Beneath the forest's cool and branching shade
Oft spring salubrious plants, whose juices pour'd
Into the wound, abate its burning pain;
Others endow'd with virtues which assuage
The fever's heat, allay its glowing fires,
And still the tumult boiling in the veins;
The circulating fluids hence derive
A hue more florid, while the nerves acquire
More vigour.—Weak enfeebled nature feels,
With life restor'd, her languid powers repair'd.
Near to yon rural village I survey
A grove of stately trees, less stately far
Than the proud tow'ring oak, which yet afford
An object more delightful to the view.
An hour scarce fled, transported I beheld
On yonder boughs a beauteous boundless glow
Of blooming flowers.—The lovely chearing scene
Charm'd the pleas'd eye, and swell'd the heart with
But see, the gaudy spring has soon resign'd [Joy.
Her ravish'd beauties, drop'd her fragrant stores
In autumn's golden lap; her blossoms shine
No longer, while each bending branch is hung
With loaded fruitage. Breathe ye gentle winds,

Blow

Blow soft, ye western gales, in pity guard
 The tender offspring from the killing storm,
 Pour'd from the angry North. Oh! teach the pear
 To nurse its juicy progeny, till time
 Has mellow'd its rich pulp to the pleas'd taste,
 How grateful when dissolving as we eat!
 Let the plum hang unruffled on its bough,
 And nourish her delicious fruit a while,
 Till ripen'd by the genial sun, her skin
 Is finely clouded o'er with glossy blue.
 O! let no rugged shocks, no furious blast,
 Disturb or rock our orchards, richly hung
 With yellow treasures; no injurious wind
 Precipitate their burden to the ground,
 Before the autumn's kindly warmth has giv'n
 Their juices a rich flavour, and the sun
 'Ting'd o'er their blushing sides with streaks of gold.
 Classes of these unnumber'd, their gay coats
 Burnish'd with various hues, Oh taste refin'd!
 Furnish our storehouse now.—Some richly grace
 Our morning entertainments, or regale
 The palate 'midst the sultry heats of day.
 Some borrow ripeness from the falling snow,
 And in the winter carry autumn-smiles;
 These load the salver, make a beauteous shew
 Amidst the gay desert, and give a close
 To our luxurious feasts; while others fill

Our vats with foaming juice, matur'd by age,
Which sparkles in the glass, nor yields the prize,
Now pure and delicate, to nectar'd wine.

At distance there some green enclosures rise,
And seem to dread a visit from the winds,
Blown from the chilling north.—A woody shade,
Or lofty wall breaks off the rushing storm;
These open to the south their verdant sides;
Their whole expansion stretch to catch the rays
Shot from meridian suns their births to cheer.
One beauteous spot superior to the rest,
Seems to attract my eye, and lead the muse
Where the green olivary's treasures bloom.
Frugal republic this; how neat, how plain?
Whate'er resembles the proud pomp of kings,
All ensigns of vain royalty that blaze
In princely palaces are banish'd hence,
Ne'er welcom'd in this modest green abode.
The products of this fruitful spot deride
The glare and dresses luxury assumes
To garnish out her sons: the garden tribes
Not gay but neat, in modest habits cloath'd;
Where elegance and nature kindly join,
To plan the rich apartments, which unite
Their beauties, both to please and profit too.
Some artful master's hand, with nicest skill
And just arrangement, all this fruitful ground

Has

Has parcel'd out in beds of various hues,
Green intervening allies cut between.

Nor has the florist's care forgot to range
Each family in its distinct abode ;
To diff'rent classes diff'rent spots assign'd.
Amidst the vast variety that spread
Their foliage o'er each beauteous bed, we view
No wild confusion—all their dwellings know.
If then man's eye is raptur'd to behold
Their regular arrangement, greater joy
His heart must sure partake, whene'er he turns
His thought to count the various gifts that flow
In rich profusion, from his garden pour'd,
His table to adorn, and grace his board
With guiltless, grateful luxury.—For thee
The parsley with indented leaves adorns
Thy verdant borders, while, for human use,
The celery shoots out her whit'ning arms,
And perforates the yielding mould, to add
A luscious taste to thy rich sav'ry meals.
For thee th' asparagus with tapering stems
Lifts its aspiring head ; and, to regale
Thy curious taste, an early off'ring makes
Of the first fruits the spring's soft season yields.
Her pulpy juice for thee the melon pours,
Grateful to taste, and potent to allay
The summer's sultry heats ; whose tendrils cling
Fast

Fast to each prop, that helps her to sustain
Her golden burden. Like embattled files
The beans erect their heads in martial rows,
Stately and firm ; while the weak feeble pea,
A tender invalid, is pleas'd to twine
Her infant debile arms around the boughs,
Supporting her frail stem ; replenish'd soon
Her swelling pods with fatness, which she draws
From the rich soil, she empties all her store,
Joyous to spread it on her master's board.

On the green fruitful spot all cover'd o'er
With various plants, not one amidst the train
With useless verdure loads or shades the ground ;
Each stem that rises in this rural scene
Delights or nourishes ; for food prepar'd,
Or helpful to remove frail nature's pains.
All seasons here their diff'rent colours wear,
While, each succeeding each, the rip'ning sun
Varies their beauties ; ev'ry plant and flow'r
Springing at once to nurture and to please.
Oh ! why should he who calls this spot his own
Envy the pomp of kings, the proud display
Of regal power ! who, walking thro' the rows
Of grateful and obsequious subjects, views
Each to their lord a chearful tribute pay,
Of double use, to nourish and delight ;
Regale the palate while they please the eye.

At distance see aloft the mountains tow'r,
 Hiding their lofty heads among the clouds ;
 Their craggy ridges heaving up, as meant
 T'assault the heavens—strong boundaries, design'd
 By the almighty hand that fix'd their base
 Deep as the centre ; barriers that divide
 Empires from states, and regulate their bounds :
 What tho' their rugged surface may appear
 Deform'd and naked, yet their bowels hide
 Rich treasures lodg'd in proper cells below ;
 Thence painful industry has learn'd to draw
 Fit instruments to turn her forward soil,
 To reap her golden harvests, and procure
 Each blessing needful to make life a joy.

See where the vast extended ocean spread,
 From east to west, stretching its liquid arms !
 How high its waters rise and billows roll,
 Lashing the shore with its mad angry foam :
 See crouding navies cut and plow their way
 To visit distant worlds—beneath those waves
 Th' enormous whale, and all the finny race,
 Unnumber'd sail, the arching azure sea
 Their covering, and their bed the shelly sand.
 This the wide cistern of the world, which holds
 In its deep reservoir the various rills
 Watering the great globe's remotest plains.
 No fountain pouring out its fruitful stream

To

To fructify the desert, not a flood
 That winding thro' earth's distant regions flows,
 Nor yet a single cloud that swims above
 Th' expanded sky, but from this fruitful source
 Exhales it borrow'd waters.—Trade sends forth
 Its loaded navies o'er this waste of waves,
 Which joins far distant nations, and unites
 The east and western world.—How doubly kind
 To Britain's fav'rite isle ! and on her shore
 The riches of both Indies yearly pours ;
 The spices in Arabia's vales that bloom ;
 The ore that ripens under stars unknown :
 This the strong rampart guarding from the foe,
 And both protects us and enriches too.

Whose heart exults not with a secret joy,
 Nor feels a grateful warmth, when it explores
 The kind munificence which heaven has shower'd
 On man from morn to eve each blissful day ?
 Shall the glad hills rejoice on ev'ry side ;
 The pleas'd luxuriant vallies laugh and sing,
 Pay their just tribute to that bounteous power
 Who scatters round his blessings o'er each plain ?
 And man, heaven's favourite, be the last to join
 All nature's general joy, nor feel a flame
 Of grateful rapture swell his heart, to view
 Heaven's wide diffusive goodness beaming round
 The whole creation ? 'Midst the millions form'd

By

By this kind hand no creature left unblest'd.

While life inspires this frame, each hour shall
A witness of those grateful vows I breathe, [flow
The thanks I pay to heaven's indulgent power,
For blessings which his love unbounded sheds
On man, (the lord of all these chaste abodes)
To sweeten life, and soften all its cares.

Whatever gifts the earth, the air, or sky
Can boast, the breathing spring, the morning beam,
The incense that it sheds, the flowers that bloom
To beautify creation, all the stores,
The fruitful valley and enamell'd plain,
Or teeming glebe produce, with rapture fir'd,
Call all these various gifts of heaven thy own.

'Twas he that tinctur'd with the loveliest hue
The azure sky; his hand which first array'd
The earth with vestments of the lively green;
His pencil streak'd with various hues the flowers,
Scenting the air around with soft perfumes.
For thee the roses blossom, and expand
Their beauties o'er the morn; and to regale
Thy sense the jess'mine opes her fragrant leaves;
The gay carnation shines, the lilly blooms.
The rocky mountains, whose eternal base
Is rooted near the centre, tow'ring high
Above the clouds, rais'd by that mighty power
Who cloath'd with beauties each sweet flow'ry vale.

Whose

Whose strength ! what less than energy divine
 Could mould yon pond'rous orbs ! whose voice
 could guide

The various seasons, which alternate die
 Each into each by turns !—on him alone
 The whole creation's basis rests, who gave
 The universe a being : whose strong arm
 First rais'd, whose wisdom still the frame sustains !
 Say, should the rapid sun his progress take
 Across the heavens, unguided by his hand
 The comet's blazing orb, or planets roll,
 Their flights unmark'd, their motions unrestrain'd
 By that directing will that plans the road
 Where each shall travel ; soon would nature's frame
 Be dash'd to nothing, and great orbs with orbs
 Conflicting, soon, would crush the shatter'd globe,
 And turn earth's flaming beauties into dust.

From heaven's bright walks, and scenes above
 the sky,

The muse descends to humble vales below.
 Spirit divine assist me while I roam
 Thro' arching shades and scented beds of flowers
 That bloom around, and breathe their soft
 perfumes,

Shedding their morning incense. Here awhile
 Let fancy range, enamour'd with the scene,
 Where nature smiling in her best attire,

Puts on her gayest robes to court the eye,
 Such elegance and beauties to admire.
 How sweet, how lovely, with what glories crown'd!
 Here in a careless dress the nymph appears
 Irregular, and negligently gay;
 Proud with superior lustre; when she shines
 She summons all the sister arts to lend
 Their kind assistance in a nicer taste,
 Neatly to dress and cultivate her charms.
 These beds, the green apartments she designs
 To lodge her common strangers—destin'd those
 The curious rooms of state to entertain
 Her nobler guests; the visitors she treats
 With more distinguish'd honours. Here my eye
 Shall oft expatiate; o'er these verdant lawns
 My steps as often wander, brushing now
 Thro' thickets, and now lost among the shades
 That cool me, traversing the forest's glade:
 Tho' oft, to vary my delight, I make
 Excursions from this beauteous scene, yet here
 Indulgent heaven, to sooth the cares of life,
 Oh! may I ever fix my lov'd abode.

What sweets are these which gratefully diffuse
 Their fragrance round? Arabia's richest gums
 Scarce emulate these odours. 'Tis the flow'rs,
 The incense of the garden's breath, that sheds
 This balmy sweetness; 'tis the jess'mine's leaf

Her

Her op'ning blossoms kindly that unite
 Their mingled odours, sweetly to embalm
 Our morning walks, and to perfume the eve.—
 Say, while all nature smiles, calls not this scene
 The sluggard from his couch—— whose head
 would lie

Diffolv'd in senseless slumbers, when the morn's
 Nectarious smells invite him to partake
 A feast of fragrancy? Before the sun
 The quick advances of the fervent day
 Drink up, and with his sultry rays exhale
 The volatile perfumes the morn has pour'd
 O'er all the verdant landscape.—Short the treat,
 And fugitive those joys, prepar'd alone
 To feast the wakeful eye; if shut till noon,
 The languid flowers all droop, their fragrance dies,
 Quite dissipated by the scorching beams
 Shot from the fierce meridian sun, that burns
 Their beauties up, exhales their humid sweets,
 And melts the air into a liquid fire.

See the great parent of mankind, when morn
 First opes the chrystal curtains of the sky,
 When rising from his dewy bed, he hails
 The new return of light, in raptures view'd
 The vernal flowers that round his Eden bloom.
 Oh! hear him thus address his beauteous bride
 Still slumb'ring on her verdant couch reclin'd!

• Arise,

- ' Arise, my fair one ! greet the op'ning day !
- ' Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field
- ' Calls you !—You lose the prime to mark how
spring
- ' The tender plants, how blows the citron grove ;
- ' What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed ;
- ' How nature paints her colours ; how the bee
- ' Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweets.' *

How soft a fragrance does the morning breathe
From off each spicy border ; to the smell
How grateful, nor less pleasing to the eye,
The bloom of opening flowers.—Kind nature here
In nice proportion all her favours deals ;
Those gales around the blissful garden pours,
Neither too strong the organs to oppress,
Nor yet so faint the senses to elude.
How often is the sated palate cloy'd
At the rich sumptuous feast, how soon offend
The loathed dishes which last moment pleas'd ?
But the high relish which each sense partakes
From nature's gifts the appetite ne'er tire,
Which please it more the more they are enjoy'd.
E'en luxury itself, when feasting here,
Is guiltless, and esteem'd a crime no more.
These balmy sweets at once each sense regale

* Milton.

I

Instead

Instead of hurting, the soul's powers elate
To feed on pleasures pure and more refin'd.

What vivid colours these! some nobly bold,
Some delicately languid! what a glow
Is kindled in those leaves; what glossy beams
Shine in that beauteous bud! In one I view
The ruby, with her bleeding radiance fair;
In this the sapphire tinctur'd o'er with blue;
All flaming with such rich and adiant dies
As cast a shade o'er all the boasted scenes
The painter's noblest pencil ever drew,
And rob them of their beauties, vanish'd all
Amidst a group of flowers whenever seen.
The skill how masterly that has dispos'd
The varying tints, some carelessly display'd
Around the foliage with a dash of ease;
Some, finish'd by the touch of nicest art,
More accurate unfold their mingled dies;
But whether nicely blended, or arrang'd,
Or soften'd, or contrasted, they disclose
A skilful taste that never fails to please,
A beauteous elegance that always charms.
How fine the texture of the web is wove
On which its shining treasures are display'd!
Say, can the Persian looms a bloom unfold
To match their shining hues? or can the thread
Drawn by the Mechlin needle thro' the lawn,

Boast

Boast an embroidery so rich and fair,
 As grace the various tints which nature spreads
 On each enamel'd bud? The chintz admir'd
 For its rich gaudy colours, loses all
 Its gait and beauty; and appears
 Coarse as the canvas, when its fading bloom
 Dies and is lost, the bright carnation near.

Go boast, vain man, thy costly rich attire,
 Proud of thy shining velvet and brocade;
 Ambition this how low! how much beneath
 The dignity of man, with thought inspir'd,
 And gifts of wisdom; whom yon heavens ordain'd
 Immortal—To abate, to crush thy pride
 View this embroider'd spot, and blush to view
 Each common daisy, glittering round thee, wear
 A richer dress, more exquisitely fair,
 Than vanity in all her glory plum'd.

Deck then thyself in all the splendid dyes
 That shine upon the queen's refulgent robe
 In royal state, when she assumes her crown;
 Yet each discerning eye that e'er survey'd
 The beauties of a garden, or beheld
 The flow'ry populace that paint the field,
 Comparing each with each, is forc'd to own
 The tulip's foliage and the rose's bloom,
 Diffuse a radiant splendor that outshines
 The rich apparel of an eastern bride.

This lovely situation, how it warms
 The heart with gladness, drives away each gloom,
 Dispers'd and vanish'd, when our steps approach
 These scented beds of flowers, whose lively hues
 And odours both the raptur'd sense regale,
 And touch the soul with a soft mingled joy.

How often have I felt the gloom of thought
 Near lost and dissipated, 'midst the glow
 And fragrance of the flowers that breathe around;
 Hence rapt'rous joy, hence mirth for ever young,
 With ev'ry new delight inspire the soul.

Shall then we gaze with wonder when we
 view

A king's imperial purple thrown aside,
 His state forgot, and diadem unpriz'd,
 Walking 'twixt blooming ivory and gold?
 Who from the sumptuous table would refuse
 In raptures to retire, and leave the feast
 By luxury prepar'd, to feed on joys
 More exquisite, on pleasures more refin'd?
 Stand we amaz'd that queens should oft forego
 The grandeur of a palace, and refuse
 The tributes of obsequious bending knees,
 Withdrawing from the glitt'ring pomp of state,
 To view the gay parterre, where beauties smile
 More radiant than the richest courts unfold;
 When nature's equipage these flowers diffuse

More glory than the lustre of a crown.
 See in what various tints the flow'ry tribes
 Their sev'ral beauties shew, and court the eye
 With new delight, distinguish'd each from each
 By different hues—how wise the bounteous hand
 Of that indulgent power ! tho' perfect all
 His works, who yet on all the charms bestows
 Of novelty to shew 'em still more fair.
 A regular and uniform display
 Of nature's gifts, presented to the eye
 In one unvaried lustre, soon would tire,
 And drive th' offended sight more charms to find
 In other objects, differing in their hues.
 But heav'n, still fond the sense to entertain,
 Exhibits, to regale the raptur'd eye,
 Something for ever new, each species grac'd
 With its own native lustre, proud to wear
 Its own peculiar beauties, nor assume
 A radiance borrow'd from a rival flower.
 A single glance from an observing eye
 Discovers at one view the mode and air,
 And delicate distinction, that is seen
 Peculiar to each class, while all appear
 Dress'd in a various beautiful attire.

Some rear their heads majestically high,
 The garden's sov'reigns, and, with proud disdain,
 O'erlook the humble tribes that blush below ;

Plebeian these that creep beneath the shade
 Of those tall monarchs, who their births obscure.
 Others more modestly their tops uprear,
 The gentry of the garden, nor aspire
 At greater honours than the middle space,
 Between the lofty and the low, to gain ;
 While some, who all ambitious views disclaim,
 Contented with an humble station, creep
 Upon their verdant borders ; there we view
 Some elegantly strip'd, those studded o'er
 With radiant spots, while some affect to shew
 Their bosom powder'd, or indented leaves
 All shining with a beauteous fringe of gold ;
 While in a modest dress, their aspect plain,
 Some in their native simple beauties fair
 Seem to attract the eye, and wish to please.
 The monarch's purple, see that tribe assumes ;
 This, all in bridal virgin white array'd,
 Chuses its milky bosom to unfold
 Unstain'd with colours.—But no sable flower
 Of doleful black appears, nor gains a place
 Amidst the beauteous daughters of the spring :
 The weeds of mourning, how unfit to shew
 Their gloomy heads where all the scene is gay,
 And universal nature smiles around ;
 How pleas'd, in robes of richest radiance dress'd,
 Each breast with soft ideas to inspire.

View

View yonder spot—behold a warrior stands,
 Clad in his martial crimson—turn your eye,
 There the proud judge or magistrate is seen
 Rob'd in his purple : there a brilliant beau
 Struts in full pride, his variegated plumes
 Dipp'd in the gaudy colours of the bow
 Bending across the sky ; some tow'ring rise,
 And form a curious cup, or pendant fall
 In rows of hanging bells ; while others swell
 Their radiant tufts, or now their foliage croud
 Into delicious clusters ; every tribe
 Boasts its distinguish'd stain, some master dye,
 Which soften'd by degrees, soon loses all
 Its reigning lustre, till its radiance lost,
 By gentle diminutions from your eye,
 Faint and more faint, it steals itself away.
 Pleas'd with the gradual change, we smile to view
 The sweet delusion and ourselves decoy'd,
 Finding the lively tints we first admir'd
 Now lost, or lessen'd by a neighbouring shade.
 There the fine rival tinges each with each
 Contending, emulous to gain the prize
 Of beauty, scorn to join and mix their bloom,
 Disputing the pre-eminence ; improv'd
 More by the opposition, they conspire
 To lend each other new augmented charms.

Lord of the universe ! how grand, how fair
 Are all thy works, by wisdom all contriv'd,
 And with exactness still more nicely plann'd ?
 A single work with labour man essays
 To finish and complete ; in vain he tries
 Repeated efforts, when his pencil strives
 To imitate the beauteous strokes display'd
 In nature's gifts, the leaf, the plant, or flower.
 The architect divine, whose voice bespoke
 Ten thousand worlds at once, all with one breath
 Begun and finish'd, with their numbers gave
 Each being, with compleatest grace to please.
 Repeated trials only serve to shew
 The flaws and errors of each plan design'd
 By human wisdom, awkward, tho' contriv'd
 By man's exactest art and nicest care.
 For ages past, for periods that have roll'd,
 Lost almost in the deep abyss of time,
 Each beauteous structure, rais'd by heavenly skill
 And plastic power, continues still to please ;
 No fault discover'd in the perfect plan, .
 'The first fair model nature's god design'd.
 Man's finest products when minutely view'd,
 With greater imperfections still appear ;
 'The delicate designs, the schemes of heaven,
 'The more we pry into, transport the eye
 Still with fresh graces, op'ning as we view

New strokes of beauty unobserv'd before.

Should any ask, what, when, or whence con-
The rich materials chosen to adorn [vey'd
And beautify creation's blooming scenes !

Where the gay tints, the splendid colours grow,
The stores of shining crayons, varying dyes,

Selected by heaven's pencil to adorn

Creation's beauteous surface !—Say, what need,
Where wisdom infinite conducts the plan,

Of costly preparations to complete

Those works almighty power has once contriv'd.

One single principle that acts beneath

The guidance of his forming hand who rais'd

Creation out of nothing, can diffuse

And branch itself into a thousand forms,

Quite finish'd, various all, as well as fair.

The moisture of the earth, and ambient air,

Passing through curious strainers, and dispos'd

In ranges of pellucid tubes, compleats

The wonders which all nature's scenes unfold,

Producing all those beauties which the power

Of vegetation nurses and displays.

This creeps along the fibres, tho' conceal'd,

Of the low-grounded moss—this mounting climbs

Up to the cedars lofty tops, that hide

Their heads among the clouds ; this, tho' unseen

Attracted by the root, and carried round

In

In circulating channels, to the eye
 Invisible, pervades each leaf that blooms
 Or on the tree, or shrub, or lowest flower ;
 Now bursts into a gem, and now expands
 Itself in op'ning verdant leaves, then cloathe
 The spring with all the beauties that it wears.
 This single operation has a power
 To vivify all nature, to revive
 Her charms, by winter's chilling blasts destroy'd,
 Op'ning each fragrant bud that kindly breathes
 Its odours on the new reviving year.
 This blushes in the early tints that grace
 The gay hepatica ; this lends a charm
 To the rich varied poppy's spreading plume ;
 It reddens into blood whene'er it flows,
 Tinging the luscious mulberry's rich veins ;
 Its juices more diluting, when they throw
 O'er the gay quince a vest of burnish'd gold.
 These breathe in all the fragrant gales that blow
 Across our gardens, shed the rich perfumes
 And incense, scenting all Arabia's groves.

What still endears the blessings that adorn
 And beautify the world's delightful scenes,
 Their regular gradations ; when one tribe
 Succeeds, soon as another fades away.
 All make not their approach at once, nor glow
 With one continu'd lustre, but agree

Each

Each in its various turn to please the eye ;
 One class of these in waiting to display
 Their verdure, when the first has lost its bloom ;
 Each ready and prepar'd to seize the place
 Fill'd lately by the wither'd tribes that shed
 Their leaves and radiance, to delight no more.
 The snow-drop, foremost of the vernal train,
 First shews her virgin head, and breaks her way,
 Piercing the frozen glebe, the first to pay
 Her early adoration to that power
 Who all her early buds in white arrays ;
 Dress'd in a robe of innocence, she dares
 Venture abroad, nor any danger fears,
 Ere their young op'ning leaves the trees unfold,
 Or yet the winter's icicles are thaw'd.
 The crocus next her yellow top unveils,
 Gently, and with a timid air—She hears
 The howling winter's blasts that blow around
 Her infant blossoms—fearful yet to heave
 Her head above the bursting glebe, she hides
 Her tender leaves still in her bed enclos'd,
 Not vent'ring yet to the bleak chilling sky
 To trust her golden foliage, while the north
 Pours out its rattling storms across the air.
 Nor are the violets gay heads the last
 Of all the shining train that dress the year
 With vernal beauty, whose accomplish'd grace,
That

That might a royal garden well adorn,
 Yet humbly condescends in all her bloom
 To line our hedges, nor disdains to breathe
 Her sweets beneath the shrub's inclement shade.
 Freely and unimplor'd her bounty throws
 From off her flowers emissive rich perfumes,
 While she herself her blushing beauties hides
 In the close covert, chusing more to give
 The eve a pleasure, than to shine admir'd.

The polyanthus that so late adorn'd
 Th' embroider'd border with her shining dyes,
 Oft from her bed transplanted to bestow
 Fresh beauty on our windows; see how soon
 She fades and languishes, the eye beholds
 With sadness all her vernal bloom decay,
 Each after each expiring, till at last,
 Drooping, her beauty sinks into the grave.

The loss how soon forgot I—for see, array'd
 In all her pride, with richest colours gay,
 Th' auricula now spreads her varied plumes!
 How bright her chrystal eye, her lovely robe
 Of glossy satin, breathing sweet perfumes
 From out her latent cells, all powder'd o'er
 With silver grains of dust.—Not one of all
 This spreading family but shines renown'd
 With honour'd titles: heroes, monarchs, queens,
 Are known to dignify the various tribes

Of

Of this illustrious race : but ah ! how soon
 Has the sun's glowing fervor all exhal'd
 Their stock of fragrance ? ev'ry beauty lost
 That lately pleas'd, transports the eye no more.
 Whose heart, what tears sufficing to bemoan
 Their absence ! had not heaven's indulgent care
 Now wak'd the tulip from its bed to shine
 With rival lustre ; this the gayest tribe
 That flush the rich parterre, in colours dress'd
 The fairest, blooming nature ever wears.

Say, can the gayest splendid beau, array'd
 In all his birth-night finery, display
 A dress more beauteous, or more richly chose
 Than this enamell'd flower, whose leaves excel
 The beauties woven in art's curious loom.
 Here sportive nature her vagaries plays,
 Her guiltless freaks indulging, while she sheds
 A thousand diff'rent colours to array
 The tulip's glowing leaves ; no wantons these
 To kindle loose desire, but neatly dress'd,
 Their great Creator's glory to proclaim.
 Next view the bright anemone arise,
 With a rich spreading robe her basis crown'd,
 Rounded her head in yet a fairer dome.
 The flowing mantle that she wears, displays
 A noble negligence ; its tufts that bend
 How gently downward, equally disclose

As nice a symmetry. Fain would I call
This splendid flower the garden's gaudy beau,
Boasting the mix'd felicity to join
And reconcile the strokes of art with ease.

What wonder next arises to regale
The eye with varied beauties?—'Tis the bloom
The vivid gay ranunculus unfolds.
How bold, how graceful it expands around
Its shining foliage! boasting by degrees
Each still excell'd by each, such various hues
As shame the works of art, and throw a shade
O'er each faint scene the pencil ever drew.
This lordly flower its richness scorns to draw
From powders or from essences, that give
Their merits to the garden's meaner tribes;
This no attraction wants, more pleas'd to shine
In its own native lustre, own'd, by all,
The favourite of the curious—while each eye
Is raptur'd to survey its mingling charms,
Its elegance of form, the radiant bloom
Its tinges spread; its dignity allow'd
Superior when it glows with all its flame.

See, nature yet improves her last essays
Still the most elegant—to crown the scene
With fairer products of her genial care,
And grace the rich collation; see, she wakes
The gay carnation; with what colours grac'd!

What

What glories round her op'ning leaves unfold,
 Her various gifts delighting to diffuse,
 The smell obliging, while they cheer the eye.
 In her sweet blooming bud are center'd all
 Perfections by each other tribe enjoy'd.
 The moment she appears her beauties claim
 Attention from each ravish'd eye that views
 Her varied elegance, and sheds no tear
 The loss bemoaning of each other flower.

While all the rest now bloom, and soon decay,
 The beauties of a morn, that spring and die,
 While yet we are admiring.—There—behold
 The gilly-flower, a constant real friend,
 Attending you thro' every fleeting change
 And revolution of the rolling year !
 A transient visit while all others pay,
 This not a guest, but chuses to be thought
 A kind inhabitant, pleas'd to adorn
 Your garden, when by winter-blasts destroy'd
 Each sister flower has wither'd--droop'd--and dy'd.

Here let us pause awhile to number o'er
 The wise and kind designs which heaven has plan'd
 In regular succession, to display
 The flow'ry tribes by turns that fade and bloom ;
 Some starting into life, while some expire :
 No season of the various changing year
 Without its beauties.—Did they burst the glebe,

At

At once unfolding all their mingled hues,
What would the scene appear?—a vivid blaze,
A gay confusion, with united rays
The eye confounding, they were meant to please.
Blended together, with too bright a glare
They pain the sight, unable to compare
Each with the other's beauty, which beheld
Each separate from each, would charm the more,
And give the raptur'd eye a softer joy.
But here to different classes are assign'd
Their different stations and distinct abodes ;
This blooming after that, allow the eye
Time to admire, to view, and to review
Their beauties oft, our senses to regale,
Now with their lustre, now their rich perfumes :
This orderly array not only gives
Each bed and flower a more distinguish'd hue,
But to each family imparts a share
Of immortality, a constant bloom,
Which varying, never dies. While thus the year,
Each season is replenish'd with a gay
Profusion of delight—as one declines
Its drooping head, another class unfolds
Its springing foliage, and supplies the room
Of those that time has cover'd with a shade.

Goodness immense ! thus kindly to provide
A series of still varying joys to feast

Each

Each human sense, directing ev'ry flower
When to expand its leaves, and when to fade.

How priz'd his wisdom and paternal care,
That kind indulgence, which each morning cloaths
Our walks with softest verdure, bids our flowers
And gardens with alternate beauties bloom :
This bed all lustre, while the gems that shone
So lately on the next, are all decay'd ;
Each family directed when to breathe
Their sweets around, and when to disappear.
No actor on the stage, however fam'd,
His entry or his exit better knows.

Say, whose persuasive voice has pow'r to draw
The daffodil from out his bed of snow,
So early to entrust its flow'ring gold
Midst chilling blasts and bleak inclement skies ?
Whose wisdom, which informs the various buds
That blossom on each tree, to wait the time
Till genial suns and vernal showers invite
Each branch, its leaves and beauties to unfold ?
Say, who directs and bids the clove conceal
Its spicy fragrance close within its cells,
Till summer suns and warmer beams infuse
A richness in her bosom, and conspire
To tinge her leaves with a deep crimson dye ?
Who in such order and exact array
Marshal'd these shining troops, and taught the tribes

Each in the proper season to display
Their regulated beauties, which by turns,
Each after each, now blossom, now decay,
One class reviving while another fades.

These are his works, the fair unerring plans
Of that productive wisdom which compleats,
In number weight and measure, all it frames,
Quite from the lowest shrub, beyond those scenes
Where angels glitter on their radiant thrones.
He tunes the seraph's voice in songs to hymn
Their great Creator's glory, nor disdains
The meanest worm or insect, that by turns
Crawl in the dust or flutter in the air :
'Tis he marks out the shining path where roll
The golden globes of light along the skies,
Nor yet forgetting from its humble bed
To rear the violet, or to paint the rose,
With mingling beauties to adorn the plain.
If summer, like a sparkling bride, appears
Bedeck'd in gayest robes and rich array,
What do we then behold but feeble rays
Of that divine effulgence from his eye,
Pour'd out e'er yet creation's beauties dawn'd ?
If yellow autumn crowns the laughing glebe
With loaded harvests, to impart a joy,
And glad the heart of man ; we here admire
Heaven's bounty streaming still, still unconsum'd.

When

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When the loud thunders roar and cleave the air
 In the dread blast, we hear his trumpets sound,
 When light'nings dart around, kindling the skies
 With forked fires, trembling we view the spears
 Launch'd from his angry hand, with terrors arm'd;
 When shook from off their base th' eternal hills
 Like dust are scatter'd, rocking to and fro
 Their bending frighted tops whene'er he frowns,
 Here rev'rence and adore that awful power
 That shakes the mountains—yet not half display'd.

From heaven's bright wonders, scenes above
 the skies,

The muse descends, delighted to pursue
 Her rural labours; here she first surveys
 The just arrangement of each plant and flower,
 The various colonies, whose bloom adorns
 Our gay parterre with one unfading blaze:
 Their structure finish'd with so nice a care
 Of nature's curious hand, the smallest change
 Or alteration greatly would impair
 Their regular perfection, and wou'd shade
 Those beauties which in vain it strives to mend.
 Say, should the tulip's leaves, her rich attire,
 Irregular and wanton fly abroad,
 Just like the flaunting woodbine's rambling boughs,
 Or should the jess'mine rear her tender head
 On the strong stem and columns that sustain

The lordly holyoak ?—did we survey,
Proud of his manly aspect, tow'ring high,
The piony assume a piteous air,
Hang down its drooping head, just like the bells
Of the sweet hyacinth ?—or should the eye
Behold the lilly's noble plainness change,
And wear the glittering fringes that adorn
The pink or iris ? should the tapering spires,
Arising in the centre of its base,
And tip'd with golden pendants, disappear,
Just like the folding chives that cover o'er
The anemone, while blooming ; ev'ry change
Of that becoming order nature wears,
Would seem fantastic ; serving to impair
The native worth and beauty of each flower.

The time and season when each bud should shew
Its op'ning verdure, is, with prudent care,
(Cautious to mark when ev'ry stem should bloom)
Wisely distinguish'd. Should the flow'ry tribes
Venture to peep abroad when winter storms,
Rattling aloud, infest the freezing year,
How fatal were the dread effects that wait
Th' imprudent boldness ? Nature then ordains
Each family ; the shortest stem that shoots
And spreads the smallest foliage when it blooms,
To launch abroad, and its young buds unfold,
In the year's chilling seasons : how severe

Would

Would be the penalty, should ev'ry flower
 That boasts its rich perfume, unseal the cells
 Where lodge its finest essence, and expose
 Its sweets to northern winds and winter rains ?
 Our aromatic artists then, aware
 Of dangers from such rashness that would flow,
 Postpone the op'ning of each balmy tribe,
 Nor vent'ring to expose when chill'd the sky,
 Their odorous treasures till the sun has warm'd
 The atmosphere with soft serener air.
 No longer dreading now the blasting storm,
 Or deluge, which intemp'rate winter pours.

How should the human heart be then dispos'd,
 To humble resignation ! to whate'er
 The sov'reign will of providence decrees !
 Too often we repine, as oft arraign
 The conduct of that wise Almighty power ;
 And vainly dreaming we ourselves could plan
 A scheme much better suited to bestow
 The happiness his wisdom could not frame.
 We fancy that our lot had pleas'd us more,
 Some other station than what we enjoy,
 Contributed to make our life more bless'd.

Behold, proud man ! the regular array,
 The just disposal of the meanest flowers ;
 Then learn to blush, and, ah ! to own a shame
 At thy repining folly ! Not a streak

In all their composition, not one line
 In all their lovely features, by a change
 Could be transpos'd, but what would throw a stain
 Upon their injur'd beauty.—Does that Eye
 Ranging in so exact an harmony the toys
 That glitter in a garden, in one hour
 Shining and faded, pay a less regard
 For human happiness ? say, does he chuse
 A proper season when each stem shall bloom,
 Expand its leaves to sip the morning dew,
 And shall his watchful care o'erlook the bliss
 Of sons and daughters ?—Pine, alas ! no more,
 Uneasy mortal, know that God is wise ;
 Thy value far superior in his eye
 To each production which his power displays,
 To gild the skies, or beautify the field.

Be still—and, if his sacred will ordains
 Sicknefs to be thy portion, never dare
 Arraign his love, or arrogantly dream
 That health had been a blessing more desir'd.
 If heaven decree from thy fond arms to snatch
 The blooming beauteous offspring, still allow
 These fav'rite pledges from thy breast were torn
 In mercy, tho' to thee as yet unknown :
 That power that martials all the starry train
 In beautiful array, extends his care
 To each low herb that creeps upon the ground,

Conducts

Conducts the varying changes of thy fate
 With vigilance that nothing can elude,
 With goodness which can never to know an end.
 Bow then thy head, in adoration bow:
 And fix it in thy heart, what heaven ordains,
 If life or death, if poverty or tears,
 Whate'er befalls, *Is right, and best for man.*

Midst all the various products which the voice
 Supreme call'd forth the third creating day,
 The shining race and family of flowers
 Bloom with their beauties only to regale
 And gratify man's senses ; none but he
 Enjoy their verdure, taste their rich perfumes ;
 These gifts for him alone by heaven design'd ;
 No creature else through all creation found
 Smit with the lustre, with their odours charm'd :
 When does the horse a moment lose to gaze
 And wonder at their beauties ; when the steer
 Once turn aside his steps, as pleas'd to feed
 And browse upon their sweets ; these, boasting sense
 To view such objects in the gross, want power
 To taste each fine accomplishment that shines
 Distinctly fair in every herb and flower.

Say, what the wise design which nature means
 By all these gay appearances that glow
 And beautify our gardens ?—'Tis t' enfold
 And cherish the soft embryo seed, to swathe

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Its tender texture in the infant state,
E'er yet from out its cells call'd forth to spread
Its springing bloom to beautify the plain.

Tho' various ends kind nature may design
In all her works, yet one we always view
From which she never varies—to bestow
Delights, the raptur'd human heart to cheer.
Had she intended only to secure
A fresh succession from each latent seed,
Close cover'd in its cell, the parent's care
Had needless been, in such a rich array
Such elegant and beauteous folds, to hide
The tender offspring—why such art employ'd,
Such decorations chose, and fine attire
That shames the shining purple, gay brocades,
Softer than lawn, and of a finer glow
Than on the velvet's glossy threads admir'd?
If the great mother had no other aim
But a warm vestment kindly to prepare,
To guard her infant progeny when they gain
A vegetative life; a garb less gay
And radiant might have suited them as well
As the most gaudy tissues that derive
Their varied beauties from a Persian loom.

What other aim has then the grateful flower,
Why dress'd in such enchanting grace, why glow
Her leaves with such bright lustre, but to yield

Pleasure

Pleasure to man? For this their court they pay
 To all the human race, for this the tribes,
 The fairest of their kind that deck the field,
 Croud round our habitations, rarely seen
 At distance blooming from our blest'd abodes.
 Tho' rude at first, they joy to thrive beneath
 Our cultivating care and watchful eye;
 But soon degen'rate, fade, and pine away,
 Unnursed by their master's friendly hand.
 Quite coy, and fearful each to disoblige
 His curious search, they hide beneath the ground
 Whate'er may seem offensive to his view;
 To win whose favour, and his cool retreats
 To beautify and garnish, they display
 Their most engaging forms and graceful hues,
 Breathing, to merit more their lord's esteem,
 From their sweet beds a flood of rich perfumes.

Nor at all times alike do they diffuse
 Their grateful offerings, but reserve in store
 Their purest exhalations, to embalm
 His morning walks, or when more pleas'd to tread
 His green parterre in the cool dewy eve;
 Amidst their blooming ranks, when now dispos'd
 To recreate himself, they lavish all
 Their richest fragrance, and around him shed
 The choicest spirits which their buds enfold.

Fav'rite

Fav'rite of heaven ! lov'd darling of the sky !
 Distinguish'd by its goodness, nobly strive
 To rival his munificence and care
 With equal gratitude ! be this thy aim,
 To hymn his praise who lavishly has pour'd
 Such blessings, with a kind unsparing hand,
 To give each sense a pleasure all its own ;
 When ev'ry creature else beneath adores
 Heaven's king in silent eloquence, be thou
 Their sacred herald ; lend to each a tongue ;
 Priest of the mute creation, join thy voice
 In vocal harmony to chaunt his praise.
 Oh ! thank his bounteous love for blessings show'r'd
 On ev'ry being which his power first call'd
 To life, and which his bounty still sustains :
 First in the scale of mercies number those
 Peculiar to thyself—thy bliss supreme,
 A soul immortal, rational, divine ;
 This constitutes thee lord of all the sun
 Surveys beneath, and gives thee to enjoy
 The riches which o'er wide creation stream.
 By this ten thousand beauties are descry'd,
 In shades all lost, which else had dy'd unknown ;
 This renders them the source of each delight,
 Parents at once of piety and joy ;
 By reason's power ennobled to admire
 All nature's glorious works, to boast a soul

Stamp'd with our maker's image, to survive
 And shine thro' endless ages, when the globe
 Shall moan her beauties buried in the dust,
 When worlds are vanish'd, and the lamp of day
 (A lamp no more) extinguish'd in the skies
 Rolls on a darken'd orb, and ev'ry star
 Now glittering round the heaven is lost in shades.

Say, should some gen'rous friend a structure raise,
 Without thy cost erect a mansion fair,
 By art, with ev'ry elegance adorn'd,
 The favour still augmented, should the hand
 That rear'd the edifice employ its care,
 With rich and splendid furniture to grace
 The sumptuous building which his bounty rais'd.
 On thee, lov'd fav'rite of the pitying skies,
 Heav'n has this favour shower'd, on thee bestow'd
 In rich profusion whatsoe'er thy thought
 Can fancy, or thy warmest wish implore.

For us the beauteous earth how widely spread,
 The paradise of man—the radiant skies
 Stretch'd o'er us, with a canopy of gold,
 Magnificently fair, in azure dy'd;
 With floating streaks of silver now array'd,
 Now tinctur'd with the crimson's vivid hue:
 Beneath our feet a spacious carpet spread,
 The verdant grass appears, with threads of green
 Wove

Wove in each filken leaf, and damask'd o'er
With intermingled flowers of ev'ry dye.
The sun above its flaming orb displays
Its golden lamp hung up on high, to pour
From his rich urn a radiance blazing round,
To gild and flush the lustre of the day.
When mounted on her silver car the moon
Ascends her eastern throne, with milder rays
To chear the universe, unnumber'd fires
Shot from the twinkling stars diffuse their beams,
A kindling glow of light, to break the gloom,
Not meaning to disturb our soft repose
(So mild their light) with too intense a glare.
The clouds, beside their paintings, hung all o'er
Heaven's convex, act the part of shifting scenes,
And kindly interpose to cool the flames
Shot from the scorching sun's meridian rays ;
Nor less their use, whom providence has chose
The fruitful water-spouts, which through the air,
Wafted by various winds, their moisture pour
O'er earth's extended regions, drop their dews,
To fructify each plant and springing flower.
To thee the fields present their golden stores,
The fruitful granaries each autumn fill'd,
To feast thy table ; the vast ocean thine,
That reservoir, which drinks a thousand streams,

Nor

Nor yet o'erflowing.—Ev'ry creature spends
Its strength for thee, ready at thy command
Thy orders to dispatch—some pleas'd, resign
Their cloathing, to replenish and to grace
Thy sumptuous wardrobes, ready at thy call
To pour their lives away in streams of gore
To gratify thy taste ; the earth, the air,
Each element a plenteous storehouse, fill'd
With rich abundance—treasures hoarded all
For thy delight and use : each season pours
On thee its choice productions, nature seems
Thy bounteous caterer, and to endear
Her various favours, all are useful found
At once, and lovely ; nothing she bestows
Inelegant or mean—each scene is clad
In beauty's fairest robe ; proportion guides
Her hand whene'er it draws, exhibits round
A fund of pleasures to delight the eye,
A fund of plenty to supply our wants.

Encompass'd round with mercies, can the heart
Of man rebel against that pitying pow'r
Who loads him with his richest gifts each hour ?
Oh ! gratefully those crouded gifts survey
Drop'd in thy lap by his endearing smile ;
See how he courts thy ravish'd heart to own
His gracious bounties, seeming to disdain

All

All limits—straiten'd by no scanty bounds.

What lively picture here do I behold
Of industry ! whose kind and friendly care
This spot into a beauteous Eden turns.
Here we enjoy whate'er can entertain
The eye, or treat the smell with rich perfumes !
Had it been left unnurtur'd, this gay scene,
A garden now delightful, had appear'd
A desert waste—the thistle had deform'd
Its beauties, cover'd with the tangling briar ;
Soon had these scented beds become the nests
Of noxious serpents, and the lonesome home
And haunt of creatures that infect the air
With poisons from their murderous jaws exhal'd.
But see the spade and pruning-knife employ'd
By industry's kind hand, have clear'd the glebe
From suffocating weeds, and in their room
Planted whate'er is grateful to the eye ;
The rueful waste, by cultivation chang'd
Into gay scenes, with Eden's self might vie.

See with what care the curious florist tends
His springing nursery ; each morn and eve
He visits their abodes, with richest mould
Feeding their tender roots ; he now supplies
Each plant with moisture, now employs his care
To guard them from the insects rav'nous tooth,

Or screens 'em from the winter's blasting cold.
 With joy each op'ning bud he oft beholds,
 Attentively observes them as they blow
 From fair to fairer still ; nor ever cease
 His pleasing rural labours till they shine
 More beauteous, and in full perfection bloom.
 Children of folly, shall this range of flow'rs
 When nurs'd and nurtur'd by art's curious hand,
 Spring up and flourish, blossom in the morn,
 E'er night their beauties lost, at least decay'd ;
 Shall these be tended with more zealous pains,
 Or warmer application, than a soul
 Divine, immortal—ne'er to cease or die ?

On ev'ry side surrounded, I admire
 Clusters of infant flowers, within their cells
 'The buds embosom'd which their beauties hide,
 Their sweets lock'd up within their guardian
 folds ;

E'er long the sun's enliv'ning beams shall chear
 And open their rich foliage, to the day
 Expand their graceful leaves ; how gay a bloom
 Then blushes on their cheeks, what incense
 flows,

What rich perfumes, their balmy bosoms breathe ?

At

At proper distances dispos'd we view
 A range of stately * stalks ; see how they rise,
 And stand like lofty towers along the walls
 Of towns well fortified ; their tops will soon
 Asunder part, the stem that lifts them high
 With penfile spiky pods quite gayly hung,
 From these the wand'ring stranger soon will view
 Bursting, a beauteous figure, spreading wide
 Its round and yellow plume in colours dress'd ;
 How priz'd and grateful to the curious eye ?

One faculty peculiar to these tribes—
 The fondest passion for those kindly beams
 The sun diffuses, to unfold their bloom.
 Soon as the ev'ning her dark mantle throws
 Round nature's varied beauties, see they pine,
 And droop their languid heads ; their shining
 leaves

Close folded up within their nightly cells,
 Just like the mournful lover banish'd far
 From her fair eye whose charms his bosom warm'd.
 Soon as the sun now mounts his eastern throne,
 Op'ning the radiant eye-lids of the morn ;
 See they up-raise their radiant tops to hail
 His kind approach, their golden leaves expand
 To meet and welcome the return of day ;

* The sun-flower.

Nor lose the sight of his refulgent rays
 Before its orb is hid beneath a shade.
 The morning op'ning, we behold the flower
 Its golden bosom to the east unfold ;
 At noon expanded to the middle sky,
 And waiting its lov'd patron's flight till eve.

Yon plant *, which to the south its head
 reclines,

Has beauties which the muse has left unsung :
 Just like the fruitful, though the feeble vine,
 She spreads a num'rous family around
 Of helpless boughs, unable to sustain
 Their weight unaided by a sunny wall.

As yet the tender shoots have scarce unveil'd
 Their infant blossoms, closely all conceal'd :
 Time soon shall ripen the rich varied bloom,
 And open their gay lustre to the day.

Amidst the beauteous families that shine
 In sunny robes, and sip the silver dew,
 This lordly flower the noblest import wears,
 And with a more majestic presence glows.

If passing in review—this regent claims
 The prize of grandeur and the first renown,
 Due when the sun expands its ample round,
 And studs its various leaves with sparks of gold.

* The passion-flower.

One subject yet * that beautifies this scene,
 And yet unprais'd, demands the muse's quill :
 So delicate her structure, soft her frame
 And constitution, that she dreads to shew
 (Till genial springs have warm'd the balmy air)
 Her fearful head, 'midst winter furs unveil'd ;
 Chusing to live, when frosts benumb the skies,
 Close cloister'd up within the green-house cells.
 Of all her kindred species, one she claims,
 One quality peculiarly her own,
 Perceptive life partaking ; joining thus
 The sensitive and vegetative powers,
 Herself the chain connecting both in one.
 Strangers her mystic nature who explore,
 Would almost be inclin'd to think her leaves
 With some degree of caution were endow'd :
 If touch'd they tremble, take the first alarm,
 Conscious of danger, while her fibres grow
 Contracted in a moment, and in dread
 Of violence, from your finger's touch withdraw,
 Shrinking her head precipitate, in fear
 Of feeling her pure innocence betray'd.
 Perhaps her beauteous aspect may be foil'd,
 The niceness of her texture discompos'd,
 By man's familiar touch—she therefore strives,

* The sensitive plant.

Like a coy virgin, with a tim'rous care,
To keep at distance, lest familiar grown,
The hand that touches may impair her bloom.

The time is just elaps'd since we beheld
These curious fair productions of the spring,
Rugged mis-shapen embryos ; had the glebe
Been open'd, and their roots with care survey'd,
With what contempt th' offended eye had view'd
Their coarse originals ? But see how soon
The pride and boast of nature they appear,
Dress'd in their shining robes and gay attire,
Dilating ev'ry human sense with joy.
From them th' enamell'd stone its lustre steals,
The rich embroid'ry borrows all its shades
And varied beauties : with a fainter light
In the gay tap'stry and rich brocades
Each silken flower is taught to bud and bloom.
Art ne'er must hope, with all its boasted skill,
To emulate the beauties of a flower ;
How rough the finest smoothest strokes, compar'd
With these which nature's curious pencil draws.
The proudest nymph, in richest robes array'd,
Glittering with silver, burnish'd o'er with gold
To add still greater lustre to her charms,
New beauties from the pink's vermilion steals,
More sweetness from the bosom of the rose.

How soon, alas ! the chearful muse must change
Her panegyric into strains of woe,
Lamenting o'er each fine production, shower'd
From nature's lap to beautify the plain !
With sadness I foresee their speedy doom,
Their hour approaching that shall hide in shades
These pleasing scenes, and ravish from our eye
Each beauteous object of the blooming year,
Deform'd and shrivel'd—mingled now with earth
A trodden heap, to shine and please no more.

Ye bright, amongst Eve's brightest daughters,
view

In this reflecting glass yourselves display'd ;
Be vain no more, but own your charms excell'd
And sullied by the lustre of a flower !
The frailty of your state how near allied
To the swift transient glories that array
Its leaves this hour, the next to disappear !
Those blue transparent veins, alas ! how soon,
Scorch'd by a fever, may resign their hue !
A slow consumption, secret and unseen,
May wither all your beauty's bloom, soon pale
Your florid cheeks, and rob them of their flame :
Some shaft discharg'd from heaven's avenging sling
May sink, depress, or load your hearts with woe :
Or else in pity should your heaven restrain

Those

Those num'rous crouding ills, the gen'ral lot
Of those who breathe this air; yet wrinkling age
Is halting on a-pace, which in the dust
Buries each beauty of the young and fair.

Soon shall those sparkling eyes be hid in shades,
Those beamy orbs too soon shall sink, or roll
In agonies of death.—What courage then
Sufficient the dread combat to maintain,
Support the trembling heart, when conscious
The destin'd arrow's shot that bids it bleed?
One remedy, one only yet remains—
Prepare betimes. In virtue's rich attire
Array your soul; those heavenly robes will suit
A being for immortal bliss design'd:
No more a shining object now below
Amongst earth's fading beauties, born to die;
In light more radiant round heaven's golden throne
Still shall you glitter, when its darken'd beams
The sun has quench'd, when stars resign their fires,
And desolation o'er the world prevails.

How soon, oh, flow'ry tribes, must ye decay!
Yon lilly fee, the beauteous virgin queen
Of all the gay creation—how she rears
Her graceful head, majestically fair!
Mark what an air of grandeur she assumes,
That dignifies her aspect! Let us view

Her lofty elevated mien, array'd
 In purest lustre to attract the eye.
 The monarch blazing on an eastern throne,
 In all his regal pomp, must yet resign
 The prize of glory to a rival flower :
 Yet tho' august, alas ! she now appears,
 How swiftly shall her fleeting bloom decay ;
 The wonder of a few short transient morns :
 Soon her unspotted whiteness must retire ;
 Her snowy form defil'd ; that head which soar'd
 Superior, now, humbled to the dust.

What noble grand simplicity bestows
 Its merits on the lilly's virgin robe !
 Gaudy and gay the colours, richly spread
 In varied tints, which sound the tulip's fame ;
 See in what mix'd profusion, splendid dies,
 Her cups are beautify'd ; her glowing streaks
 Strongly contrasted, to each other lend
 A fairer radiance, a more lively bloom !
 How lately this each border's youthful pride,
 The reigning toast, that pleasingly adorn'd
 The spring's delightful season with its bloom.
 A while it shines in all the glittering dies
 That paint the rainbow's arch amidst a shower.
 Transient and fair, like that, it spreads a while
 Its beauteous plumage—but, alas ! how soon

Are

Are all its glories vanish'd, each gay stripe
How quickly lost, and splendid now no more.

Graceful her shape, each op'ning feature
fair,

Still to augment her fame, the budding rose
Breathes from her balmy breast a rich perfume :
To this gay stranger often we repeat
Our morning visits, and as oft at eve,
Ne'er wearied with her sweets ; its leaves diffuse
A fragrance so reviving, rich, and pure,
That all its close acquaintance ever covet.
How oft have I beheld th' accomplish'd fair,
The gay Clarissa, lovely, beauteous maid,
For whom so many pensive lovers sigh,
Careless fondly on her raptur'd breast
This fav'rite flower ; that bosom chose its seat
Where innocence and virtue make their home,
Whose rival softness and unspotted white
Vies with the falling snow : yet to increase
Her charms, though fairest she among the
fair,

Contracts yet beauty from the blushing rose,
Yet sweetness from the odours it exhales.
But ah ! the lovely darling of the fair
Its balmy native beauties must resign,
Hanging how soon neglected on its stem.

Pity, alas! our wishes want a power
 To give this darling sweet a longer stay;
 Blooming one vernal month, the next to fade:
 Expands its short-liv'd glories in the morn;
 Oh, transient visit! wither'd e'er the noon.
 This moment lovely; when the sun has steer'd
 A few swift journies thro' the liquid air,
 The verdant scene which entertains the eye
 And ev'ry sense with joy, shall then appear
 A rugged desert, a rude wasteful wild,
 A nursery of weeds instead of flowers.

Ye flow'ry tribes, how soon must ye submit!
 The winter, like some conquering chief enrag'd,
 That carries desolation where he flies,
 O'erturns the tottering tower, and dies his
 sword

In the deep bleeding wounds of millions slain,
 Now with his savage unrelenting rage
 Hides all this blooming prospect in one shade.
 The storms now gather, and the tempests pour
 Their rattling blasts that roar along the sky,
 And with united violence assail
 All nature's treasures, threatening to destroy,
 Lay waste, and ravage all her richest stores.
 Each tree its verdant foliage now resigns;
 Lost ev'ry fading beauty of the field,

Spoil'd

Spoil'd of their waving harvests which array'd
 Their golden furrows : now the freezing glebe,
 Disrob'd of all her gaudy fine attire,
 Mourns like a widow in sad sable dress'd.
 The sun, now riding on his golden throne
 Triumphant, pouring from his radiant eye
 A flood of light, inspiring, where he shines,
 Each heart with gaiety, will faintly glow
 Soon with diminish'd lustre, from the south
 Casting a transient glance, and soon to leave
 The gloomy world, o'ersadow'd with the night.
 The mournful turtles then no more must breathe
 Their pensive songs to the soft gentle gales ;
 Nor on the spray each eve indulge their woes.
 Mute now is ev'ry grove disrob'd, the woods
 With tuneful harmony no longer found :
 How sweet the music lately which they breath'd,
 Made vocal by a thousand warbling tongues !
 Ye flow'ry tribes, how soon must ye decay !
 Yet, could your feeble texture be exchange'd
 For the oak's strength, or that which firmly rears
 The marble pyramid, how short your stay,
 How transient your duration ! Can the flower
 Hope for existence long, when nature's frame
 Is tottering, when her pillars to and fro
 Are shaken, and the world's eternal base

Fails

Fails to preserve her shattering orb entire !

The sun, in all his glory now array'd,
Beats fiercely with his rays upon my breast ;
To yon inviting arbour's cooling shade
I now retire, where the gay woodbine hangs
Her lucid drops pendent on ev'ry bough,
Where the rich jess'mines line the green alcove,
Impearl'd, and shining with their gemmy dew.
Hail, ye refreshing shades ! my bosom feels
Your cheering influence, my spirits glow
With new reviving fire, each nerve new strung
Recovers its lost strength, while nimble life
Thro' all her crimson channels briskly bounds.

Here, on a verdant mossy couch reclin'd,
Enrich'd with fragrance and refreshing shade,
In silent solemn raptures, let me breathe
My grateful aspirations to that power
For ever present—When rude tempests roll,
And toss the angry waves from shore to shore ;
When plaintive signals from the bellowing deep
Are heard from fearful wretches in despair,
Or melancholy mournful sighs, that breathe
Pale anguish and distress, come floating o'er
The foaming surge ; delightful then to view
The madding ocean, when retir'd to shore
Remote from danger—If the swelling clouds

Pour

Pour down their torrents o'er each delug'd plain,
Sweep off the helpless herds; the peasant flies
To his low hut, and finds a refuge there.
Then from some mountain's summit to descry
The threat'ning tempest, without fear or pain;
How pleasing this! how grateful to the heart!

Just such my transport in this cool abode:
For now the sun is blazing from on high,
And shoots its fervid beams—the glowing air
Is all a liquid flame, and red with fire;
Each field is cleft with chinks, each road quite hid
With clouds of dust; the traveller fast hies,
Scorch'd as he journies to some cooling glade;
While bath'd in sweat the peasant drops his scythe,
And cattle to some shady covert fly,
Or panting faint beneath the burning noon.
E'en stubborn rocks feel the sun's piercing ray;
All nature languishing beneath those flames,
The fiery deluge from its orbit pours.
Here,—and how great heaven's bounty! I enjoy
A calm and cool retreat, and in the gloom
Nurse calm reflection, where his beams are lost,
And the sun darts in vain his piercing ray.

Amidst these summer sultry heats behold
A nation, in defiance of the sun,
Who ply their constant labours, spread at noon

On

On each expanded blossom ; here the bees,
Industrious chymists, suck the balmy dews
From each sweet flower, endow'd by nature's care
With that mysterious secret, to acquire
Wealth for themselves each season, nor offend
Or injure others.—See the golden tribes,
Unwearied with their toil, their flight pursue
From bud to bud, extracting liquid sweets
Drawn from each fragrant blossom : from each leaf
They sip delicious juice, nor fix a wound
In its nice texture, leaving still behind,
Loaded with spoils, more treasures than they steal.
While the gay butterfly, with painted wings,
Fluttering, a careless rover, scarce enjoys
A short fantastic feast, the pleasure lost
And tasted in a moment's rapid speed ;
Or while the gloomy spider lies conceal'd,
Weaving insidious nests, whose glewy rays
Detain th' unwary fly, or else employ'd
To suck rank venom from each noxious flower ;
These frugal labourers, wisely to provide
Against futurity, with painful care
Collect their balmy spoils, enrich their cells
With golden treasures, while their summer's toil
Supports 'em in the winter's hive confin'd.

Collected

Collected now, in one transporting view
 All nature's various beauties I behold,
 Each after each unfolded, which before
 Cheer'd my pleas'd fancy with distinguish'd
 charms.

Struck thro' an antient wood I here survey
 A vista, form'd by venerable rows
 Of spreading elms, which guide the ravish'd eye
 To some delightful object, seen from far
 Thro' the green op'ning which the stranger leads
 Directly to these beauteous blooming scenes.

See here each verdant wall, how richly cloath'd
 With fruit trees, blushing with their golden load,
 Cover'd and hung with tapestry that shines,
 Unartful, wove in nature's finest loom.
 View there the new-shorn walks with verdure lin'd,
 The alleys arch'd with a green cooling shade,
 Embow'ring our sweet noon-tide's soft repose !
 The entrances thrown open, that the air
 Might court us to enjoy the balmy eve.
 There the green box, whose edgings round enclose
 Each beautiful compartment, where the flowers
 In different stations are allow'd to bloom,
 With splendid figures all their various homes
 Diversifies, that each its bed may know.
 The flowering shrubs, and stately evergreens

There strike the eye, which please with equal
 grace

And dignity, at distance when beheld.

Still to augment our bliss the basin pours

Its chrystal treasures from its humid urn,

Which gives a fragrant freshness to each flower

That drinks the fruitful drops—Nor is the ear

Depriv'd of its delight ; the waters pour'd

From the cascade, or gently roll'd along

The shining pebbles, murmuring as they glide,

Transport this sense with tides of equal joy.

Endear'd the more by contrast, each bestows

On each new beauties, mingling now their charms,

While order with variety conspires

To paint the scene magnificently gay.

Can these bright scenes below transport the eye,

Nor yet incite the mounting thought to dwell

On heaven's refulgent splendors ? to explore

That world of bliss, those regions of delight,

Which please, tho' yet unseen. What artist's hand,

Whose skilful pencil has the power to draw

A landscape of those flowery seats that shine

And blaze with golden light above the skies ?

Would some kind angel draw aside the veil

One moment, and permit the eye to throw

A single glance on those divine abodes,

The

The earth's vain pomps, the glories that are
spread

O'er nature's face would die, would disappear,
Tasteless, and tarnish'd all—A transient view
Of those resplendent scenes, those blest'd abodes
Would captivate the soul, enlarge its powers.

After so bright a vision, Eden itself,
A lonely cheerless desert would appear,
And ev'ry beauty now that charms the eye,
In heaven's superior dazzling light, expire.

A
DESCANT
UPON
CREATION.

CREATION! boundless scene! which
 swells the soul

With awe and pleas'd amazement; while it views
Thy ample wide circumference, array'd
With varied beauties, which the hand divine
Has sprinkled o'er the earth, and seas, and sky!
Thy circuit how magnificent, how stor'd
With wonders, which each ravish'd sense confound,
While they transport us! Heavenly sacred muse
Inspire thy poet's voice, his breast inflame
With ardor, beam'd and borrow'd from the sky!
Teach her beyond Creation's bounds to soar;
The verse proportion'd to the noble theme.

Angels, ye sons of light, celestial powers,
Who great in might, in dignity excel,
In radiant circles shining round the throne

Of your triumphant King—in robes array'd
Of golden lustre with the stars that vie.

Ye, who on glory's lofty thrones are plac'd,
Sublime your stations, and in vestments cloath'd
Dipp'd in heaven's richest dyes, oh ! praise, adore
That God, who grac'd and dignify'd your name
With titles so illustrious ! All assume
Your golden harps, and aid the hallow'd choir,
Hymning in sweetest strains Jehovah's praise ;
All nature joining in the sacred song.

Ye radiant heavens, whose bending arches rise
Magnificently high extending wide
Beyond the reach of thought ; beneath whose height
And ample circle worlds unnumber'd roll ;
Vast amphitheatre, expansive round,
Their rapid flight where orbs enormous wing ;
Each soaring above each, the thought amaz'd,
As on they race, across the kindled sky,
Lost to the keenest eye—while millions roll
In the blue depths of ether, half unknown ;
To that almighty power, who with a span
Measures your vast dimensions, who recall'd
From darkness and from nothing into light
Nature's stupendous structure, be not last
Ye vocal heavens, to join the solemn choir,
And breathe your adorations at his throne !

Ye glittering stars that light the midnight sky

With

With brilliant lustre, unextinguish'd flame,
Oceans of fire, that stream with golden rays ;
Centers of other worlds, which float around
Their parent orbs, and wheel about their spheres ;
Oh cease not, as your lamps with brightness cheer
The solemn brow of night, to pour a song
Of gratitude, and hymn your maker's praise.

Comets, heaven's dire portents, with swift career
Who fly from world to world, and shoot your flames,
Sometimes in depths of ether, while the eye
Strives to pursue your blazing orbs in vain ;
Now from your long excursions who return
Illustrious strangers, sweeping in your flight
The hemisphere with your red fiery train ;
Now travelling to the sun's bright burning beam,
Scorch'd in the solar rays, now backward turn'd
To regions far remote, for ages froze
Beneath the rigour of the chilling sky ;
Whatever climes you visit, or beneath,
Or far above the sun, your off'rings pay
Of gratitude to him who wings your flight
Thro' various spheres, and fills your orbs with flame.

Ye roving planets, who with rapid speed
Traverse the different regions of the sky ;
Now soaring high above the solar way,
Now sinking in your downward flight beneath
The sun, your motion's center ; ye who guide

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The varying seasons, faithful to the change
 And sweet vicissitudes of night and day,
 Your praise oh breathe to him, whose mighty arm
 Launch'd you at first, directs you where to rove;
 Points out the road thro' which your orbits roll
 With speed, surpassing thought, along the sky!

Thou sun, vast inexhausted fount of light,
 Of heat, of comfort, of each bliss below;
 Without whose genial warmth and cheering rays
 All nature would appear one dismal gloom;
 Parent of day, from whose bright car are pour'd
 Torrents of flame, which beautify and shine
 On twice ten thousand realms; nor yet confin'd
 To realms alone, whose beams diffuse a day
 O'er various worlds that round thy orbit roll:
 The animal creation cheer'd by thee,
 The vegetable tribes that cloath the year,
 All join to hail thy kind refreshing rays!
 So beautiful thy sphere, so rich thy urn,
 That pagan nations adorations pay,
 And pour their daily incense on thy shrines;
 Fountain of life and light, oh breathe a strain
 Of grateful praise to him who bids thee shine;
 Who fills thy orb with lustre, guides the wheels
 And axle of thy chariot round the sky
 With ceaseless speed, unwearied with the toil.

Thou

Thou fairest of the fair nocturnal train,
Amidst the glittering starry hosts the prime,
Whose radiant eye illuminates the gloom,
Bright regent of the night, and decks the shade
With gentler splendors, and a fainter day !
Gay lucid queen of night, who sometimes shines
Dimly refulgent, boasting scarce a power
To scatter from the midnight's low'ring brow
Its sable curtain—now all cover'd o'er
With sackcloth, frightened nations to alarm !
To him, with borrow'd beams who silvers round
Thy changing orb, be adorations paid :
Oh break thy silence, uttering from thy throne
A grateful song to thy Creator's praise.

Ye mighty thunders, awfully that sound
In the black distant clouds, and threaten still
From the first essays of the bursting sky,
A peal more loud and dreadful ! ye that rend
Above our head heaven's concave vault, and shake
With horrid cracks the trembling world below ;
Ye from your dark and fiery womb who send
Shafts in tremendous show'rs to either pole !
That startle the affrighted herds, and shed
Dismay and dread on ev'ry heart amaz'd ;
To him who gives pale terror leave to sound
Its trumpet in your deep and solemn roar,
Cease not to yield the fullest loudest praise.

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Ye ruddy light'nings, from the sulph'rous cloud
 And beds of nitre who discharge your flames,
 That glance with forked fury as ye fly,
 And dart your glowing bolts across the gloom !
 Heaven's vengeful terrors, that in ashes laid
 And whelm'd in heaps of ruin the abodes
 Of lust and * violence—whose shafts shall soon
 Kindle the elements, and lend their aid
 To spread the general conflagration round
 A guilty world, and turn it into dust,
 Adore your mighty King, that sov'reign power,
 Creator, builder, architect divine
 Of num'rous worlds, who lights your flashing fires,
 Directs your burning arrows where to fly,
 Their points by him commission'd in their flight,
 What victims to destroy, and whom to spare.

Ye frowning winter clouds, oceans that hang
 In the mid air, a burden to the winds ;
 A scourge how terrible, when in the hand
 Of heaven incens'd ! your floods who often turns
 To magazines of veng'ance—When his voice
 Opens your sluices, gushing torrents pour
 From out your bursting flood-gates, to destroy
 The peasants hopes, now levell'd with his earth ;
 To him who molds you into icy balls,
 Each wing'd with death to drive against his foes ;

* Sodom and Gomorrah.

Your adorations be not last to breathe,
While universal nature hymns his praise !

Ye vernal clouds, thin furls of finer air,
Folds of the softest moisture ! He who draws
In exhalations from the briny main
The mounting vapours, leaving yet behind
Each noxious quality, while now ye flow
Clear silver fountains of the purest rain !
He who dissolves you into gentle dews,
Dismiss'd in soft and fruitful showers to fall,
And drop down fatness on the smiling field,
Cloathing the verdant spring with op'ning flowers;
That power immense, who gives your copious urns
To drop, and paint the face of nature gay,
Demands the tribute of your grateful praise.

Thou grand ethereal bow, whose beauties shine
And flush the firmament ; each raptur'd eye
Transported with thy bright and vivid hues,
Emblem of peace to man ; that God who drew
Thy bending painted arch across the sky,
Decking thy splendid round in all the pride
Of richest colours ; by whose sole command
Thy streaks of light by turns or glow or fade,
Each dying into each ; oh, breathe a strain
Of loudest praise to him, who with thy beams
Of mingled radiance decorates the sky.

Ye tempests, storms, and hurricanes, that rave
 And vex the continent ; now tofs the brine
 And billows of the ocean up the air,
 The cloud and waves but one—that godlike power
 Who arms and lends you rapid wings to drive
 Whole navies, dash'd against the rocky shore !
 That split the forest oak, in shivers rend
 Its lordly branches—He whose breath inspires
 Your madding fury, and whose nod controls
 Your boist'rous uproar in your wild career :
 Tho' loud your voice, be louder still ye storms
 And tempests, when ye sound Jehovah's praise.

Blue pestilence ! whose baleful breath is arm'd
 With quick destruction, scatt'ring from thy wings
 A stream of noxious poisons round, which leave
 Whole regions desolated, great and fair,
 Without inhabitants ; that God who points
 Thy shafts with death ; who bids thee march before
 (Prime of heaven's terrors) his indignant brow,
 To shake the world with dread, and shed amaze
 Amidst the tents of his reluctant foes :
 That sov'reign name, which gives thy tainted breath
 To ravage and unpeople where it blows
 Destruction round, forget not to adore—

Thou heat, whose burning influence turns to dust
 The Lybian deserts ; tans the Æthiop's brow
 With footy darknefs, by whose fiery beams

All nature sickens, languishes and dies!
Thou cold, whose icy breath each chilling year
Glazes the Russian sea, and to his fails
Glues the numb'd mariner; the peasant turns
Into a rigid statue, flesh no more!

Where'er you burn, where'er in icy chains
Ye bind the frozen earth, be mindful still
Of Him who gives you power to freeze and glow.

Ocean! vast world of waters, He whose hand
Hollow'd thy ample basin, sunk a bed
Capacious to receive thy foaming waves;
Pour'd out the liquid element to fill
Thy mighty depths unfathom'd; in whose eye
Thy floating mountains and proud surges seem
Like the small drops that from the cloud distil;
He, whose least intimation lifts thee high
And swells thy liquid kingdom, bids thee roll
In wild confusion, warring with the sky;
Or with a word commands thee to subside
In calm composure, slumb'ring on the shore;
He who ordain'd thee once to overthrow
A guilty world, to bury and o'erwhelm
Its impious tenants in a wat'ry grave;
Now bound in chains than adamants more strong,
That check thy madding surges, which thy waves
Warring with tempests, strive to burst in vain!
Oh cease not, as thy floods roar up the sky,

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Or flatten to a calm, to own his power
Thy waves ordaining when to rise or fall.

Ye tow'ring mountains, which o'erlook the
clouds,

And into distant realms project a shade ;
Strong pyramids of nature, to be mov'd
By no conflicting elements, nor tore
Or shaken, when dread earthquakes cleave the
ground ;

Ye lofty turrets, he whose mighty voice
Bid your aerial ridges soar so high ;
(Tho' in heaven's balance lighter than a plume,
Immense yet less than nothing in his eye)
He who erects your lofty summits, claims
A tribute in your loudest hymns of praise.

Ye verdant woods, the shaded hill which crown,
In leafy honours ye yourselves array'd ;
Ye humble shrubs, which the young spring adorn
With opening blossoms, fann'd by ev'ning gales ;
Who in our gardens, or in distant lawns
Breathe spicy odours, and embalm the air,
Brush from your fragrant wings a rich perfume,
To him who fills your buds with scented dew.
Ye groves, ye hills, your richest treasures pour,
And load with incense all his hallow'd shrines.

Thou mantling vine, oh, cease not to adore
That God, who hangs upon thy slender boughs

Thy rich transparent clusters ; who beneath
Thy native foliage dost that juice prepare,
Strain'd thro' thy pores, exalted, rich, refin'd,
Which cheers the heart and fills the cup of joy ;
Ye trees, whose spreading arms wave high in air,
Or close confin'd adorn the sunny wall ;
He who with richest fruit your branches loads,
Whose genial warmth lends beauty to their rinds,
And mellows your rich taste, demands a share,
Ye verdant tribes, of gratitude and praise.

Luxuriant meadows, He, without the toil
And seedman's industry, your lap who fills,
Each lawn replenishing with grassy stores
Of juicy herbage ; He whose bounty spreads
A cheerful green and flowers of ev'ry hue
O'er each enamel'd plain ; who kindly crowns
The peasant's labour, and repays his toil
With waving harvests, on each field that smiles ;
Who from the fruitful furrow calls, each year,
The staff and prop of life ; that God, whose voice
Gives the fat glebe and fields to laugh and sing,
Loaded with golden plenty, calls aloud
For just returns of gratitude of praise !

Ye mines, enrich'd with beds of golden ore,
Or bright with veins of silver, who convey
Your shining treasures to each distant pole ;
Far as the winds can waft across the main

The

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The floating navies, burden'd with your stores ;
 Ye who on proudest kings your alms bestow,
 Nature's fair rivals ; in your dark abode
 Who form the glitt'ring gem and lucid stone ;
 The brilliant diamond now, with sparkling rays ;
 The ruby now, glowing with crimson flame ;
 Dipp'd in the freshest verdure of the spring
 Now mould the emerald, or the saphire grace,
 Ting'd with the fairest lustre of the sky ;
 The topaz with its yellow veins emblaz'd ;
 The amethyst empurpled with the beams
 And radiant blushes of the virgin morn !
 Ye mines, That matchless Power who beautifies,
 Tinctures with light your hard metallic ore
 Consolidates your lucid drops, demands
 Your grateful homage, and a hymn of praise.

Ye gushing fountains, from your urns who pour
 Rich floods of liquid silver ; ye clear streams
 Along your flow'ry fringed banks which glide
 In chrysal currents—Rivers deep and wide,
 Who wind and wander thro' meandering shores ;
 Parents of plenty, who your riches spread,
 And gladden kingdoms, as ye glide along,
 Adding a tribute each to swell the main ;
 That God your fruitful channels who supplies
 From heaven's unempty'd overflowing urns,
 Calls on each grateful rill its share to pay

Of

Of gratitude to his imperial throne !

Ye vocal sweet musicians of the spring,
Who in brisk strains by turns, and dying falls,
Solace from morn to night the rural shade !
Ye birds, gay chearful tenants of the grove,
Drest in your glossy plumes, who wake the day !
Each ear transporting with your artless lays :
Ye, without rule or line, who build on high
Your pensile structures, with the nicest care
Your nests contrive, each roof with arching shade
Close cover'd to protect your callow young !
Musicians of the grove, from ev'ry spray
Warble in concert your Creator's praise.

Ye bees, industrious artizans, who ply
Ceaseless your pleasing toils, with busy wings
Sweeping the vernal gardens ; ye who feed
On the young blooming heath, who sip the dew
From ev'ry fragrant bud, each sunny beam
Improv'd, no blossom leaving unexplor'd,
By your inserted tubes, which probe and drain
The treasur'd stores from their mellifluous cells ;
Ye, e'er in fumes of sulphur ye expire
In plenty's lap, all stifled 'midst the spoils
Collected from the souls of plants and flowers,
In your last moments, in a dying strain
Breathe out, sad victims, your Creator's praise.

Whatever

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Whatever circling-worlds or rove beneath
 Or roll above the sun, to human eye
 Invisible, in depths of light conceal'd ;
 Oh, swell the sacred symphony, which hails
 Creation's architect.

Ye herds who press
 Your grassy bed, in nightly folds enclos'd ;
 Ye beasts, who o'er the ample forest rove,
 Traverse the desert waste ; ye finny tribes,
 In countless shoals, who cut the trackless main ;
 Ye woolly flocks in garments clad, which worn
 By kings, bestow a lustre on his crown ;
 Ye from your milky udders who distil
 The sweet nectareous fluid, which regales
 A queen's luxurious taste ; ye forest kings,
 Grim lions, loudly roaring in the gloom,
 When eager in the night you hunt your prey !
 Thou huge leviathan, who in the deep
 Takest thy pastime ; all who wing the air,
 Or tread the foil, or cut the briny wave ;
 Th' inspiring impulse let the meanest feel ;
 The greatest own how impotent their power
 To celebrate aright Jehovah's praise.

Praise him ye insects, crawling on the ground ;
 Echo ye vallies, ye responsive hills
 Reverberate the sound ; ye rocks more loud,
 And vocal forests the glad strain prolong
 That hymns your heav'nly king ; ye birds who cleave

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The middle air, oh, waft upon your wing,
And warble as ye soar your Maker's praise :
Ye howling savages, with hideous roar
Who terrify the night and haunt the gloom,
Join with the wakeful songsters of the shade
Your hoarse applause, thro' earth and air to spread
From world to world your sov'reign Maker's praise.

To him who rears your tow'ring tops so high,
In sign of worship, ye tall cedars bow
Your branching heads. Your balmy incense breathe,
Ye blooming beds of flowers—Ye pleasing scenes
Of rural beauty, where nice art conspires
To dress the face of nature still more gay ;
Oh, magnify his bounty, who inspires
Each eye with gladness, raptur'd which surveys,
Nurs'd by his care, a paradise below.

Drop down ye gentle showers, and as ye fall
Gratefully testify how much ye owe
To heaven's indulgence—Soft, ye sighing gales,
Oh breathe, and murmur all ye fountains flow
In consonance harmonious—Light'nings blaze ;
Ye thunders, heaven's tremendous voice, oh, sound
Th' Almighty's name—Ye clouds the chorus join.
'Thou bellowing ocean, propagate and aid
The universal anthem—Source of day,
Address thy radiant homage to a sun
Sublimar far ; oh, write his glory fair

In thy bright round on ev'ry lucid beam.
Shine clear, ye stars, thou joyful earth, look gay;
Let ev'ry creature smile, while angels swell
In heaven's sublime abodes the sacred song,
Which echoes loud Jehovah's hallow'd name.
Wing'd cherubims and cherubs, who behold
The wonders of creating might, oh, tune
To loftiest notes your harps and golden strings,
And wake in heavenly breasts, unfelt before,
Celestial symphony, in loud acclaim
All join'd to celebrate your Maker's praise.

Let blooming youth with hoary age conspire,
The sons of sorrow with the heirs of joy;
Ye, be your fate, or gloomy, or serene;
Whether in fortune's sunny lap you smile,
Or weep, sad captives in a prison chain'd,
Break forth, both high and low, in grateful strains,
And pour your loud Hosannahs to the throne
Of him who rules above, in light array'd
Insufferably blazing; earth with heaven
In joyous hymns uniting, till your praise,
Lost in divine perfection, with a fall
Liquidly sweet, in adoration ends
Silent, expressive, rapt'rous, and divine.

END of VOL. I.

